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Examiners' Report
Principal Examiner Feedback

Summer 2023

Pearson Edexcel GCE
In Portuguese (9PG0)
Paper 1: Translation into English, Reading
comprehension and Writing (research task)

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Examiners' Report on Paper 9PG01 – Summer 2023

General comments

This report relates to paper **9PG01**, which tests candidates' ability to translate from Portuguese into English, to read and respond to written Portuguese and to demonstrate their ability to undertake independent research in Portuguese and reflect on it.

The evidence from marking in this session indicates that the paper was effective in differentiating between candidates of different abilities and that all the questions worked as anticipated.

The published mark scheme provides extensive guidance with regards to the overarching approach to marking, as well as the range of correct, acceptable and rejected responses as they relate to Section A and Section B, as well as indicative content for Section C. Teachers should note, however, that the mark scheme is not designed in such a way that every possible answer is included. Examiners look at each answer on merit to allocate marks. The approach to marking is positive, so examiners always seek to reward what candidates produce.

It is helpful for teachers to distinguish clearly between the assessment objectives stated in the specification. These are: A01- listening and responding in Portuguese; A02 – reading and responding in Portuguese; A03 – grammar and vocabulary of Portuguese; A04 Knowledge and understanding of the countries and communities where Portuguese is spoken. In this paper A02 is assessed in Sections A, B and C; A03 and A04 are assessed only in Section C.

There was varied evidence of how well candidates were prepared for this assessment, but there was little evidence of rubric infringement; this is where candidates either failed to follow the instructions, for example answering in the wrong language, or ticked more than the required number of boxes in the objective tasks.

Comments on each question

Section A

This section tests candidates' ability to translate into English. Teachers should note that in the mark scheme there may, on occasion, appear to be misalignment between the Portuguese column and the English column: this is a reflection of the idiomatic nature of translation and the way word order and clause structure varies between Portuguese and English. Reading the correct answer column vertically from the top will provide a complete translation in good English of the passage.

This year Question 1 related to the theme of ***Cultura Política e Artística nos países de Língua Portuguesa***, the subtheme: ***os Media*** and the content was focused on the aspect of ***o impacto na sociedade e na política***.

One mark is awarded for each correctly translated segment up to a maximum of 20 marks and, as previously mentioned, not every acceptable or rejected answer is included in the mark scheme. Examiners will award a mark to a segment where the message is conveyed clearly, correctly and unambiguously in such a way that

a native speaker of Portuguese with no knowledge of English would understand exactly the same message as would a native English speaker with no knowledge of Portuguese.

As part of the design of the passage for the assessment of translation into English, each segment is targeted at a particular grade and so it normal and expected that candidates with different levels of Portuguese should find some parts more challenging than others. In this way the passage is differentiated to assess across the full range of grades.

Most candidates were successful in translating:

- O direito a ser informado não pode ser questionado.

One of the passages that challenged all but the highest scoring candidates were:

- Não obstante, é fundamental para a democracia que tenhamos acesso à informação sem restrições.

There was evidence that some candidates needed to pay closer attention to the English phrasing that they used, in order to avoid ambiguity of message. Connectives, for example, must convey the same idea than the ones used in Portuguese, otherwise the message conveyed will not be the same. Time frames proved themselves to be often problematic. The disregard for the tense in the original text would change the message conveyed when translated. A close reading of the reject column in the mark scheme will provide teachers with some useful areas to work on in terms of linguistic structures.

Section B

Question 2

This question related to the theme of **Movimentos Migratórios**, the subtheme: **Emigração de Portugal no século XXI** and the content was focused on the aspect of **Os motivos para a emigração**.

This is a multiple-choice task with four parts and four options for each part. Teachers can usefully note that incorrect options may include an element of distraction in the form of a word or idea from the text. Candidates, therefore, need to be careful to read fully and carefully, rather than rely on spotting isolated words. This question targets grades C to E and is intended as a gentle lead in for this paper.

Most successfully answered was: 2 (ii)
Least successfully answered was: 2 (iv)

Question 3

This question related to the theme of **Como a História moldou a Política**, the subtheme: **Da Ditadura à Democracia** and the content was focused on the aspect of **O 25 de Abril e a Revolução dos Cravos**.

This is a multiple-completion task where candidates choose four correct answers from nine statements. Teachers can usefully note that incorrect options may include an element of distraction in the form of a word or idea from the text. Candidates, therefore, need to be careful to read fully and carefully, rather than rely on spotting isolated words. This question targets grades A to E, and so differentiates at a higher level than Question 2.

Most successfully answered were: B and C
Least successfully answered were: D and H

Question 4

This question related to the theme of **Movimentos Migratórios**, the subtheme: **A Imigração e a Sociedade Multicultural Portuguesa** and the content was focused on the aspect of **Contribuição da imigração na cultura e sociedade**. There was some evidence that some candidates did not always read the questions carefully or produced answers which, although correctly locating the information in the text, were not precise answers to the question that was asked or relied on indiscriminate or untargeted lifting from the text. Frequently, candidates did not reflect on the questions enough and did not reply to them adequately. After locating the information in the text, it has to be transformed in order to fully answering the question.

Teachers are reminded that, in free-response questions, examiners apply a strict order of elements and mark only the first viable answer that a candidate produces. For example, where the required answer is 'dog' a candidate who writes 'dog and cat' will receive a mark, but a candidate who writes 'cat and dog' will not, because only the candidate's first viable answer to the question is considered for a mark. This question targets grades A to E.

Most successfully answered was: a)
Least successfully answered was: e)

Question 5

This question related to the theme of **Mudanças na Sociedade Contemporânea**, the subtheme: **o mundo do trabalho** and the content was focused on the aspect of **A vida laboral e atitudes face ao trabalho**.

This is a free response task, where candidates are required to answer in Portuguese. Teachers are reminded to train candidates to give one detail per mark, as they answer free response questions. Some questions do carry two marks and, in some cases, there may be more than two possible things a candidate could write. This is a normal part of the way the questions work, and so there is no need for candidates to offer more information than required by the rubric. Frequently, candidates did not reflect on the questions enough and did not reply to it adequately. It is useful to note that questions are also designed so that the answers could reasonably be expected to fit on the writing line provided. Candidates should aim for concision in their responses. After locating the information in the text, it has to be adjusted to the question. Lifting directly from the text is to be avoided. A fine example is question b). Many candidates located the information in the text (lines 6/7, third, fourth and fifth sentences in the second paragraph). The successful candidate would have to infer/decipher the

metaphors in “trabalho a apodrecer” and “ideia fresquinha”. The question was about the perception for the Portuguese of working ahead of time and about the work done while it is not used.

This question targets grades A to E.

Most successfully answered was: a)

Least successfully answered was: b)

Section C

This section tests candidates’ ability to conduct independent research in Portuguese, and to respond critically to a text that relates to the research topic they have chosen. Candidates need to be mindful that they need to relate the text that they have read to the research that they have done about the topic they have chosen. The A02 information from the text needs to be contextualized and added to from the research, A04. It is not enough simply to give a critical view about the content of the text or to use the research statement simply as a kind of essay title and overlook the text.

The highest scoring candidates had effectively combined the information from the text provided with what they had researched to respond critically to the research statement. The inclusion of perceptive ideas was an indicator of high levels of performance in this task. A perceptive idea is defined in the specification and mark scheme, but broadly can be considered any knowledge or understanding that goes beyond what the average speaker of Portuguese would know about the topic in question. The research done had to be evident and traceable. References in the essays to ‘a minha pesquisa’ did not necessarily make the candidate’s research into perceptive ideas. It could only be considered ideas or even straightforward ones. The research had to be evident and could include facts, data, trends, social or historical context or the connection of ideas in such a way as to demonstrate real understanding of the theme and support the argument. These candidates had also used appropriate and wide-ranging vocabulary specific to the task and had shown their ability to write the language in a natural, authentic and sophisticated way including a range of structures and features and successful examples of complex language from the list presented in the Mark Scheme. These candidates often also showed evidence that they had proofread their own work, as was indicated by corrections made to what they had written.

The lower scoring candidates often missed a crucial element of the task; they either focused exclusively on the passage, without adding from their own research or they used the research statement as a stimulus for a generalized set of comments that were straightforward in nature and did not go beyond what any speaker of Portuguese might be expected to know. Often the language used was less academic in register, less wide-ranging, less ambitious in complexity and contained errors that impeded clarity or generated ambiguity. Here there was evidence of a lack of proof-reading.

Teachers are reminded that the mark scheme contains indicative content, but this is not intended to be definitive answer to the statement. Examiners use a level-based mark scheme and reward all relevant response produced by the candidate, accepting that each candidate may approach the task in a different way.

Research from Theme 1

The passage dealt with the fact the companies in Portugal seek for professionals already trained. Apprenticeships often tend to replace the training period, traditionally supplied by the company. Therefore, it is up to university and the students to acquire that knowledge/experience, prior to applying for the first job. Teachers should look carefully at the indicative content in the mark scheme for information about the level of response expected.

In response to this research topic, candidates produced a range of thoughtful and well-structured responses and there was evidence that only part had prepared well. For example, one candidate mentioned the excess of teachers to justify how hard it was to get a first job after university in Portugal while the reality is exactly the opposite and has been widely broadcasted in Portuguese newspapers.

Research from Theme 2

In response to this research topic, candidates produced a range of thoughtful and well-structured responses and there was evidence that many had prepared well. For example several candidates chose to tell the story of CPLP since it began, while the text was much more about the consequences of the existing policies to preserve and promote the Portuguese language, common heritage of all the countries that chose it as their official language. In response to this research topic, candidates produced a range of thoughtful and well-structured responses and there was evidence that many had prepared well.

Research from Theme 3

Many wrote about the differences of life opportunities in the country and in the city, how life in the country was improving, creating work opportunities, allowing young people to find careers in the countryside. Finally, reference to how much the countryside evolved, making life much more attractive in the countryside.

Research from Theme 4

In response to this research topic, candidates produced a range of thoughtful and well-structured responses and there was evidence that many had prepared well. For example one candidate wrote about the awareness of the Portuguese monarch of how important the trade routes to India were and how important was to preserve them and to terminate any competition that first came from the muslims. The successful candidate conciliated the main ideas from the text with its own research and avoiding telling the story of Vasco da Gama expedition.

Guidance for teachers for future sessions

1. Ensure that all candidates are familiar with the format of the paper and what they need to do in each section and question.
2. In section A, make students aware that a correct translation will not necessarily be a literal word-by-word translation. There will be difference in word order, clause structure or other linguistic features between the two

languages. The resulting English passage should be natural, correct and unambiguous English.

3. In section A, work with students using the mark scheme, to exemplify different approaches to translation. It can be useful in teaching students to translate into English to ask them to produce a 'mark scheme', rather than a translated passage; this can help to develop the ability to think laterally. It may also be helpful in steering them away from online translators, if they are encouraged to think carefully about alternatives and how to avoid errors.
4. In section B it can be a useful exercise to focus candidates not only on finding the correct answers, but also looking at why the incorrect options are wrong. This encourages a careful reading of the questions and develops metacognition in terms of how the questions work.
5. In section B teach students about the 'order of elements' rule and apply it during teaching, so that students learn to produce clear and concise answers.
6. In section B teach students to be guided by the number of marks and the space allowed for writing. This can help them give enough detail and avoid indiscriminate lifts.
7. In section C, ensure that candidates understand the task and give them practice in linking a passage with **research**. This can make a useful speaking task and provide teachers with insightful assessment for learning information about the student's understanding. Input from their own research on the chosen theme is key to answer section C. The candidate's text should be 'relevant' and include own '**perceptive ideas about culture and society**, supported by **pertinent information from research**', as mentioned above.
8. In section C, ensure students are equipped with a good range of topic specific, academic vocabulary to be able to ensure that the written response is correct in terms of register and not overly colloquial in tone.
9. In section C, give students practice in proof-reading their own work and that of others, including response models, looking to correct common errors and develop the habit of writing accurately.

