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Examiners' Report
Principal Examiner Feedback

Summer 2024

Pearson Edexcel GCSE
In Chinese (1CN0)
Paper 2H: Speaking

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Three Tasks in the Speaking Paper: Higher Tier - HC and HM

The assessment is made up of three tasks - Task 1: Role play, Task 2: Picture-based task, and Task 3: Conversation.

Candidates must be allowed 12 minutes' preparation time under supervised conditions to prepare for the role play and picture-based task. The total assessment for High tier candidates will last between 10 to 12 minutes. Task 1 – one role play recommended to last between two to two-and-a-half minutes for 10 marks; Task 2 – one picture-based task recommended to last between three to three-and-a-half minutes for 24 marks; Task 3 – a conversation recommended to last between five to six minutes for 36 marks.

Candidates must only be provided with the stimuli cards at the start of the preparation time. The preparation time must be used only stimuli provided. It is not to be used to prepare for the conversation (Task 3).

Candidates can make notes of up to a maximum of one side of A4 paper to cover both Task 1 and Task 2. Candidates must not read out whole, prepared sentences in answer to questions. Candidates may refer to their notes during Task 1 and Task 2 only.

Task 1- Role Play

In general, candidates performed well, particularly in HR1, 2, 3, 7 and 8. Candidates were able to elaborate naturally in questions like 'Say their best friend's nationality', 'Say what they often do online', 'Say two sports they often do', 'Talk about their favourite teacher', and 'Tell you two extra-curricular activities their school offers'.

Candidates performed weaker in a couple of past tense unseen questions, including 'Say what they have done to earn pocket money' (HR9 Q3), 'Say how long they have been in Taiwan' (HR6 Q2). Some candidates found the questions confusing. For example, they confused 'how long they have been in Taiwan' with 'how long they will be in Taiwan'. Some candidates seemed to struggle with HR9 as they are not familiar with the word of pocket money and felt difficult to elaborate the advantage of their plans in Q2.

Some teacher examiners didn't ask the questions in the order given on the cards, and they also asked extra questions. So those examiner teachers caused the candidates to lose the marks. In some centres, when the candidates needed to ask Q4 and Q5 according to the cards' statements, but some teacher examiners asked their own questions. After Q4 and Q5, some teacher examiners continued to ask questions like 'Anything else or why' (还有吗? 或为什么?) to encourage candidates speaking more and cause to use more than 2 ½ minutes to finish the task1.

In the future, during the preparation time, each centre should let the candidates read the instructions and all 5 bullet points on the cards carefully.

Teacher examiners should understand the exam guidance and conduct the oral exams correctly.

Task 2 - Picture-based task

In general, candidates performed well, particularly in HP3, 4 and 5. Candidates were confident in giving details when they described the photos. Many candidates expressed their opinions with a certain extent of explanations without the need for prompts. However, candidates did not perform very well in HP9 and HP10. Both cards are from Theme 5 and require an understanding of issues around the world. Candidates also needed to have a good level of vocabulary to express their opinions on these issues.

Most of candidates successfully described the picture in first question and answered the questions with fluent and developed answers. They could effectively describe what they saw, e.g. 'who', 'where', 'what', 'how', 'how they feel' or even included the people's appearance, weather, clothes, colours etc. They were able to use past, present and future tenses correctly and confidently with different time frames.

When some candidates gave very limited descriptions of the pictures or their answers were too short, some teacher examiners used the extended questions at the end of each set question "why为什么? / what else还有呢?" to encourage candidates to give detailed information within the recommended time, for example, in Question 3, some students answered by sharing their experiences in the past tense, but the content was too simple, with no time, sequence of events or feelings.

A few candidates were unable to answer questions correctly, because they didn't know the meaning of the questions in the following: HP6 Q4 - '将来, 你希望去哪里参加学校交换?', HP8 Q4 - '明年, 你想怎么赚零花钱?', HP9 Q3 - '说说你们学校举办过的一个公益活动?', HP9 Q4 - '明年, 你会去看什么国际活动?'. Some candidates didn't know the phrases in HP10: recycling bin, and natural resources.

Many teacher examiners followed the instructions and completed Task 2 within the recommended time, giving candidates enough time for each question to describe and narrate events, give information, express, justify and exchange opinions. They asked the candidates the compulsory questions verbatim, as presented and listed in the target language phrases or in the daily spoken form, without any supplementary questions. This made the candidates concentrate on answering the set questions. However, a few teacher examiners asked some additional questions. Some teacher examiners even asked candidates too many questions, resulting in them thinking of nothing, thinking for too long or exceeding the recommended time.

During the exam, some candidates may have been nervous and kept their answers too short, without expressing their opinion effectively or giving any

reasons. On the other hand, some candidates gave too much information and answered five questions more than the recommended minutes. In the future, the teacher examiners should be aware of the time limit and avoid this part being too short or too long.

Task 3 – Conversations

In the first part of the conversation, most of candidates performed very well. They chose to start with their own one-minute presentation from their nominated topic which made a confident and impressive start for their conversation. Most of the teacher examiners managed to have an equal amount of time allocated to Conversation 1 and Conversation 2.

Some teacher examiners focused only on one topic under the chosen theme, they asked following up questions according to the candidate one-minute's topic but forgot to move on to another topic under the same theme.

Some teacher examiners asked questions which covered several topics (more than 2 topics under each theme). It was difficult for the candidates to answer these questions jumping from one topic to another. Teacher examiners should let the candidates focus on two topics (in the same theme) to make sure that the candidates could go in-depth on each topic instead of wandering around in different topics.

Some teacher examiners asked questions which were from the previous A-Level papers. Those questions were out of students' language level. As an examiner should be familiar with GCSE syllabus. Some teacher examiners asked close questions which prevent students from expressing their thoughts and opinions.

Comments on Individual Questions

Task 1 - Role Play

Most of the teacher examiners started the role play well by reading the introduction in English, which was on each role play card, but some teachers translated the instructions into Chinese. After the introduction, most of the teacher examiners asked the set questions in the order given. Some of the teacher examiners might intervene to stop candidates, to make sure that candidates could answer 5 points in time or to make candidates concentrate on the questions.

However, some teacher examiners didn't prepare well or did not follow the instructions given, even change the questions. They didn't read out the questions as they are, instead, other easy expressions were used. For example, In HR7 Q3: '你昨天花了多长时间做作业?', some teacher examiners used '几个小时' to replace '多长时间'.

Some teacher examiners asked extra questions between the 5 compulsory questions, which meant that candidates did not answer the questions in the correct order and lost marks.

Q4 and Q5 should have allowed the candidates to ask questions, but some teacher examiners asked the questions and the candidate answered the questions. Teacher examiners should not ask questions like '还有呢?' or '为什么?' to encourage candidate speaking more and cause the candidates to lose marks.

During the preparation time, the candidate should read the instructions and all 5 bullet points on the cards carefully. Most of candidates do very well. However, some candidates have made the following mistakes, for example: HR6 Q1, candidates should be the accommodation in Taiwan, but a few of them explained their home in the UK. HR3 Q3, some candidates answered when they started learning '我从小开始学中文', and ignored 'how long' they had been studying. HR7 Q2, candidates should say the activities on foreign language class, however, a few candidates just explained their feeling on the lessons and forgot to say the activities.

Most of candidates can answer questions in correct tense by following the teacher examiner's question. For Q4 & Q5 requesting candidate to ask questions, most candidates did this part well and they were able to use the correct interrogative pronoun when asking questions, such as what, what time, who. However, some candidates missed the meaning of "evening", "headteacher" and a few candidates asked something else instead of the question on the role play card. In task 1, some candidates answered each question with too much information, which caused to answer these 5 questions more than the recommended time. So, the teacher examiner should control the time well.

Task 2 - Picture – based task

Most teacher examiners followed the instructions and completed Task 2 within the recommended time, giving candidates enough time for each question to describe and narrate events, give information, express, justify and exchange opinions.

However, a few teacher examiners asked some additional questions. They used not only the extended questions at the end of each set question "why/ what else", but also their own questions to ask the candidates. A few candidates were unable to answer those questions correctly, because they didn't prepare them in the 12-preparation time or they didn't know the meaning of the phrases in the questions. A few teacher examiners changed the phrases in the questions and caused the candidate to lose marks. For example, In HP7 Q3: ...说说你用科技学习的一个经历, some teachers used 手机/ 电脑 to replace 科技.

Task 3 Conversation

Most teacher examiners gave candidates full opportunity to express and justify a variety of individual thoughts, ideas and opinions. They asked questions clearly, without too much explanation, and answered candidates' questions briefly and directly (some of candidates did ask some questions in Task 3). In the first part of the conversation, most of candidates performed very well on their one-minute presentation with a variety of follow-up questions.

However, some teacher examiners are not familiar with the syllabus, and a few teacher examiners responded or explained too much before asking the questions. Some teacher examiners forgot to ask questions after the candidates' one-minute presentation and moved straight onto the second theme. Some teachers concentrated on only one theme and left very little time or even no time for the second one. Some recordings were too short while some of them were too long. Both situations have an impact on the s in terms of being able to access the top mark band.

Candidates performed generally well in Theme 1, 2 and 3, while performance in Theme 4 and 5 was considerably weaker.

In Theme 1, conversations usually focus on family and friends, interests, and celebrations and festivals. Most of candidates could express their opinion on these topics with ease. Topics such as social media and technology, film and television, reading, and role models were rarely chosen and it is mostly for high performers, which indicates that these topics require more specific language knowledge.

In Theme 2, conversations mainly focus on holiday experiences and preferences, and things to do in their local area. Most of candidates showed genuine interest in this topic, and they could provide a lot of details. Conversations often extended to sub-topics like ideal travel destinations and accommodation, although topics like directions, and asking for help and dealing with problems were not popular choices. Candidates' performance varied in these topics.

In Theme 3, most of the conversations focus on what school is like. Candidates often introduced school subjects and ECA in their presentations. School trips and exchanges were a less chosen topic. Weaker students often struggled to understand the questions and to provide details.

In Theme 4, conversations usually focus on using languages beyond the classroom and work. However, many candidates showed a weak understanding of topics in relation to employment, volunteering and training.

In Theme 5, there is a huge discrepancy in candidates' performances, especially on the topic 'environmental issues.' They did not have enough vocabulary to express their ideas and opinions accurately and cohesively.

Comments on Administrative Matters

Quite a few centres have not yet submitted the CS2 form, other schools did submit the CS2 form but without candidates' or teacher examiner's signatures. Some centres have submitted CS2 forms without the numbers of speaking stimulus cards. Some centres have still submitted PDF format CS2 forms. The microphone should favour the candidate and not the teacher examiner. Some candidates spoke very weakly or in other cases the recording itself did not pick up the candidate's speech clearly. Some recording has a rather noisy background, for example, the clock clicking, the school bell rang, the students' chatting by the door etc. It caused marking script recording a big problem. There were many experienced examiners who used a timer to conduct the exams so that the recording could complete in the right time length. It is a very good method that examiners could use.

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