

Moderators' Report/ Principal Moderator Feedback

Summer 2015

Pearson Edexcel GCSE
in Urdu(5UR02/2A)
Paper 2A:Speaking in Urdu

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GCSE Urdu
Unit 2 Speaking in Urdu
Moderator Report

General

This is by now a well-established oral assessment component of the Urdu GCSE specification. The great majority of centres have undertaken the task of preparing, examining and assessing their students' oral performance very professionally and our gratitude is due to them for making the moderation team's job straightforward. Fortunately only a few centres have had problems this year, and, where there were problems, they were not really concerned with the actual conduct of the examination.

In such cases, the Moderators have had to deal with them and to concentrate on the job of trying to assess the mark to the candidates' performances, with the proviso that candidates can only be judged upon the recorded evidence presented.

The Format.

Each candidate is required to perform two tasks, both of which are marked by the Teacher-Examiner, one of which is submitted to the Board for moderation.

There were a number of stimuli available for use by centres on the Edexcel website but centres were free to adapt these to suit their purposes or to create their own. If in doubt they could submit these tasks to the board for approval. This year only a very small number of centres presented tasks to the Board for advice and the Board was happy to do so.

The candidates will have previously chosen one of these tasks earlier in their course and will, at least in theory, have studied and practiced it in some way before recording it.

Tasks

It is presumed that the Teacher/Examiner has normally spent time with their students discussing and working on their chosen tasks. They should know their level of linguistic competence and ask appropriate questions. In the majority of cases the language used by Teacher/Examiners was pitched at the right level.

Picture Based Task

The most commonly attempted task was the picture-based discussion. Here the candidate was free to bring in any picture of their choice and talk about it with the teacher examiner. In this particular task candidates do not have to ask questions.

It should be pointed out that selecting a suitable picture is important. It must be one which gives the candidate the maximum chance to display his or her language skills.

One problem was that relatively large number of candidates' work submitted did not contain a copy of the picture, or the least, a description of

the picture. This helps the moderators immensely when listening to the material.

Presentation

The next most commonly attempted task was a Presentation when a student prepared and answered questions. This was frequently on 20-20 Cricket, which was on at the time, or a Bollywood actor or film. These were, as might be expected, variable in quality. The use of cricket match or indeed any single event in the past can be quite limiting, as the teacher-examiner has to prepare carefully in order to allow the candidate to demonstrate a full range of vocabulary and tenses, including past present and future to get the best marks.

It was a little disturbing to find some occasions when a large number of candidates from one centre performed almost identical presentations. This not infrequently occurred when candidates were describing a film they had seen. Although it is not forbidden, moderators do feel that if a whole centre is doing the same task then it may not always be in the best interests of all the individuals concerned.

Open Interaction

This was less frequently attempted, and it is generally considered to be most suited to the more able candidates.

A fair number tended to follow, more or less exactly, the samples given, such as "Tourist Information". Most were able to convey the visitor's questions and some were able to ask their own questions to the Teacher/Examiner. In this particular component it is necessary for the candidate to ask at least two questions in order to access the highest marks.

Problems

The problems arose when Teacher Examiners seemed to not have fully grasped the concept of the specification. They do have a responsibility to prepare themselves as well as their students. That means finding out what they are required to do before and during the test.

Experience informs us that when the tests are well conducted the candidates score well within their individual expertise but if the tests are not properly conducted the ability of the candidates concerned to maximize their potential is compromised.

In oral examinations, at GCSE level there has been a long-term issue which merits some comment. While it is to be expected that candidates will practice talking about their chosen topics, this component of the examination is a discussion. It is **not a monologue** or a speech and should not be prepared or delivered as such. Candidates who did so were not able to score highly in the Response grid on the mark scheme.

Teacher Examiners have a hard job but they must prepare themselves as well as their students if they are to achieve their full potential. By reading

the Specification, using the Edexcel Website to find out more information, and preparing suitable questions for their candidates, they will be better able to conduct a successful Oral Examination.

Organization of Material in Centres

The main job of the moderator is to assess and mark the candidates' performance and that is a job requiring intense concentration. If material arrives without the correct paperwork being provided, or incorrectly filled in it does make the Moderator's job more difficult and time-consuming. Another difficulty arose when the Teacher/Examiner and the candidate did not sign on the Assessment form in the spaces provided. It became necessary to contact centres and ask them to redo the form and make sure it had been signed.

Conclusion

Despite the problems mentioned above, which, it must be stressed, affected only a small minority of centres, the majority of the tests were very well conducted by well-prepared Teacher Examiners with well-prepared students.

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