



2008

LOTE: Hungarian GA 3: Examination

Oral component

GENERAL COMMENTS

Students showed a good deal of careful preparation for the 2008 examination and, compared to previous years, they showed confidence and a degree of fluency. Occasional mistakes notwithstanding, coherency was not an issue.

The Internet, while a useful research tool used to provide information, for example, on notable historical towns, also left some students without enough information related to their chosen topics. Teachers should assist students to find appropriate information through a variety of other sources.

The following are some of the areas in the language which need to be addressed.

- *Pár* governs the singular (for example, *pár haverral*) not *haverokkal*.
- *Gondoskodni* means 'take cares (of)/provides (for)/look after/take charge (of)', not *gondolkodni* which is 'think (about, of)'.
- Correct expressions were sometimes elaborated on when it was not needed. For example, *egyórási időként* should be *óránként* – the 'egy' is implied.
- *Mind* was often confused with *minden*, which is 'everything' or 'anything'. It governs the singular (for example, *minden diák átment a vizsgán, minden üzlet be volt zárva*). *Mind* governs the plural (for example, *a diákok mind jól vizsgáztak*). *Az üzletek – kivétel nélkül – mind be voltak csukva*.
- Comparisons caused some problems, but they are simple when using the *olyan mint*; for example, *A helyzet olyan rossz mint egy harmadik világban*.

SPECIFIC INFORMATION

Section 1 – Conversation

The opportunity to speak about themselves engendered spontaneity in students. First person discourse seldom caused problems.

Criterion 1

All students spoke clearly, they were able to link with the assessors effectively, they confidently conveyed a range of information and they displayed excellent communication and repair strategies. The link with the assessor was maintained well. Students' familiarity with various trades, jobs and professions in correct Hungarian was another welcome improvement on previous years, when some of these concepts were expressed more in hybrid than in correct Hungarian. Expressions like '*komputer*' are absorbed into the language and are constantly used.

Most students were comfortable with this section – information flowed freely, and students showed a good level of variety in their responses to the dialogue with the assessor. Students conversed well with a degree of conversational spontaneity and were able to correct minor mistakes. Although pronunciation was mostly good, more attention needs to be given to 'R' and double consonants. Most students demonstrated an excellent understanding of the questions asked by assessors. Only a few students needed prompting. Overall, it was evident that students were well prepared for this part of the examination.

Students used well thought out and carefully structured sentences. Even if the student's vocabulary was limited, they were usually able to rectify major errors.

Attention needs to be given to pronunciation, especially with the use of 'R's and rather weak 'T's. In some cases the pronunciation was inexact; the 'T' sound is either weak or 'swallowed' altogether, and the 'R' sound fares similarly. Intonation was sometimes very level or ascending rather than descending at the end of the sentence, as the case is in Hungarian.

The stress was not always on the first syllable of the word, which is the cardinal rule of Hungarian spoken language. There was also a tendency in some cases to use an upward intonation of the voice at the end of an indicative sentence, as in Hungarian spoken language there is a descending mode, both in words and in indicative sentences.



Content

Criterion 2

Most students had a good range of information, ideas and opinions about their lives, experiences and about their plans for the future, and were able to elaborate on them.

Students had prepared well; the information presented was original, well thought out and of a good range, however some students struggled when attempting to clarify their opinions.

The range of information was well developed, although some students tended to repeat certain points. However, there was very little irrelevant information given.

As most students had sufficient information about family, school, recreation and the future, in most cases there was an opportunity for them to elaborate on their ideas. Some students presented an excellent range of information, opinions and ideas clearly and logically. They exchanged well with the assessor, in most cases resulting in a good flow of conversation. Students are reminded that they are not allowed to divulge their name or their teachers' names in the oral examination.

Language

Criterion 3

Most students used a good range of vocabulary, even with synonyms. Expressions such as *megleckéztette*, *áldomás*, *kiváló* show students' wide ranging vocabulary as well as knowledge of the nuances of meaning.

This criterion demonstrated that vocabulary was well used and accurate; the more successful students had impressive range and others showed good control. Grammatical lapses occurred with the accusative 't'.

Some grammatical mistakes recur every year. The two kinds of conjugation in Hungarian, the direct and indirect, are frequently confused and this needs considerable attention. For example, *Nem tudom (sic) játszani* was used instead of *nem tudok játszani*. The rule of suffixes regarding movement are: *-ba*, *be* governs movement towards a place and *-ban*, *-ben* refers to being in the place.

Another commonly recurring feature is the grammatical confusion of the indicative verbal form with that of expressing command, for example, *mutatják* with *mutassák*, the *meglássák* instead of *meglátják*. The sign of the imperative is the sound 'J' inserted to the stem of the verb. However, this sound changes with certain terminal sounds of the verb, as a general rule with those ending in 'T' into a double 'ss'.

Grammar was appropriate to the audience and context of the exam. Greetings were culturally correct. All students were able to address assessors in a polite manner.

Strong students demonstrated a variety of vocabulary but weaker students were less able to do so. Grammar needs more attention. Often the 'T' of the accusative is omitted, the case ending *-ba*, *-be* or *-hoz*, *-hez* interchanged, for example, somebody *iskolához jár*. Anglicisms still occurred frequently, for example, *magyart csinálok* instead of *magyarból érettségizem*.

Vocabulary and grammar was not always accurate. Students often said their Year 12 subject names in English. Students should be familiar with the correct Hungarian name and pronunciation of their subjects.

The grammatical and syntactical errors and mistakes that occurred in the Conversation section were repeated in the Discussion. The instrumental *-val*, *-vel* is invariably always used by the more hesitant students instead of using the assimilation with doubling the terminal consonants as in case of terminal *-z*, *-s*, *-g* and others. *Kézvel* instead of *kézzel*, *szüleimvel* instead of *szüleimmel*, etc. The use of singular nouns following definite or indefinite numerals is frequently used incorrectly, for example, *minden tárgyakat (sic)*.

Section 2 – Discussion

Criterion 6

Most students were well prepared for this section of the examination. They were familiar with their chosen topic and showed evidence of careful reading of references, resulting in a good interaction with assessors. They expressed themselves clearly with excellent pronunciation, intonation, stress and tempo.



Content

Criterion 7

Students were very well prepared. They presented an excellent range of information clearly and logically. They were able to elaborate and defend opinions. Most students stated the resources they had used, including books, encyclopaedias and the Internet.

Most students spoke clearly about their chosen topic and were able to link well with the assessors. They were able to answer any questions asked and express their ideas and opinions.

Topics were generally well prepared; students had a great deal of information to communicate, which gave them plenty of opportunity for exchange with assessors. As the topics were historical, the acquired vocabulary showed that students read and absorbed the material and extended their cognitive range. The occasional anglicism tended to surface. On the whole, students' interest and logical approach indicated careful reading and thorough preparation, and they appeared to have enjoyed their chosen topic.

Historical topics and topics on famous Hungarians' lives and work promoted a lively exchange between students and assessors. Students in both types of discussion offered solid, detailed information.

Students can broaden their vocabulary by paying more attention to the use of synonyms in their discussion.

Strong students had no difficulty with expression and their pronunciation was close to perfect. For some students, however, the 'T' was weak, and 'R' was often pronounced as the English R, not the rolling Hungarian, indicating anglicised vocal patterns.

Students need to rely less on rote-learning and should practise more so that the conversation flows. Students should be given opportunities to practise general conversation. Students should present a good range of information, ideas and opinions which are relevant to the chosen topic.

Language

Criterion 8

Despite some grammatical errors, students communicated clearly and used well-selected vocabulary that showed nuances of expression and was, on the whole, effective.

Grammatical structures varied from the elaborate complex or compound to the simple. Although word order is flexible in Hungarian, verbal prefixes were often incorrectly used.

Tudok bírni was used instead of *bírok*, *bírhatja*, which is used in a physical context, for example, a weight is too heavy to carry *nem bírom ezt a nehéz kosarat vinni*. The English expression 'it takes more time' can never be *használják több időt*, but rather is *sok időt vesz igénybe* or *sok időt tölt el azzal*.

A common problem occurred with definite and indefinite numerals being used with singular nouns. Students should remember that the language does not tolerate tautologies. The numeral expresses multiplicity so there is no need for plural nouns. Students should also pay more attention to correct case endings and idiomatic expressions.

Some students were translating words literally from English, resulting in some quaint expressions, for example, *királyos* instead of *királyi* or *gazdag*, where a plain *sok* would be better. Some modifying suffixes were not known, for example, verbs from nouns, instead of '*csinálok futbalt*' the simple '*futbalozom*' would suffice, keeping in mind that lots of such transformations exist in the language. Abstract nouns are easily formed from common nouns, for example, *-ség* *fejedelmet elvenni* instead of *fejedelemséget*, *Izgalmas voltam* instead of *izgultam*.