

## LOTE: Hungarian GA 2: Oral examination

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### GENERAL COMMENTS

On the whole, students performed satisfactorily, showing evidence of good preparation.

#### Part 1 – General conversation

The conversation was handled with varying degrees of skill. Some students included English words for the subjects studied in school (e.g. mathematics, experience, university). Students were generally willing to enter into and expand topics; some were repetitive and had a restricted vocabulary.

#### Part 2 – Report and discussion

There was a good variety of reports. They ranged from St Stephen, first King of Hungary, to dogs, skin cancer, the loves of my life. This last one was successful because the student was able to imbue it with reflection and a certain commonsense. Others on seasons in Hungarian villages were flawless and presented with effective references to support materials, such as posters. Some students were able to expand and express ideas very logically, but some reports which were well researched and well presented, were marred by frequent 'foreign' (i.e. English), words. There were the usual travel and folk-dancing reports, and the combination of the two, i.e. traveling with the folk dance group. These topics were somewhat mundane but nevertheless received good to adequate treatment and supplied some scope for discussion. Health reports were also good, with students able to dwell upon and expand on the pleasures and dilemmas inherent in the topic. Some aspects, e.g. health versus a fashion topic, were somewhat repetitive, despite overall success of these reports.

#### Capacity to convey information and develop ideas or opinions during discussion of the report

Several students who had unusual reports scored well. They tended to be able to influence the flow of the discussion because of their keen interest. They were able to successfully respond to comments by the assessor.

#### Part 3 – Situation role-play

##### Capacity to develop the content of the role-play

In the role-plays, students enthusiastically argued the cases with as much emphasis as the case might require. The good speakers performed better because of the advantage of a richer vocabulary. At the lower end of the scale students showed interest and liveliness, even though somewhat hampered by a lack of vocabulary. All students showed good cultural awareness of customs and etiquette.

#### All parts of the task

##### Accuracy and variety and appropriateness in language overall

In some cases the vocabulary was basic; in others translation was discernible. English idioms or turns of phrase appeared in a Hungarian guise, which is to be discouraged. Apart from English usage and quaint English translations into Hungarian, students tended to omit the 't' ending of the objective case and used plurals with numerals – which is not acceptable in Hungarian.

##### Communicative competence

Communicative competence was most apparent in the role-playing situation. Hesitation occurred fairly frequently, especially with less competent students, and this was particularly obvious in the discussion of the report. In some cases, less successful students gave monosyllabic responses when gently prodded to respond.

##### Skills in presentation including manner of delivery of degree of accuracy in pronunciation

Generally, students 'swallow' r-s and do not put sufficient emphatic sound on double consonants in the middle of the word, rather than on the end of words (e.g. *forró, kézzel*). Intonation sometimes tends to be the upward movement, questioning English tone (much in vogue currently in Australia when making statements, questions) whereas in Hungarian the voice descends at the end of a sentence, and only rises when questioning. The extensive use of notes was infrequent. The best students did not resort to this. Not many false starts occurred, but some repetitive practices were noted. Less successful students still translated their thoughts from English into Hungarian word for word during conversation e.g. *birok kicsit megváltozni, nem birok emlékezni róla, sok szép dolgokat láttam, nem birtuk látni a Balatont, akarok sokat dolgokat látni*.

### GENERAL COMMENTS

#### Paper 1 – Processing spoken information

##### Part A – Tasks on the two spoken passages

Students' listening skills were generally of a high standard, and they did not have a problem in selecting relevant information from the spoken passages and then answering the questions.

##### Part B – Task drawing on both passages

Students were successful in selecting the relevant information from the two passages for this task and in presenting ideas that were logically organised and clearly linked. They showed a high level of competence in reorganising the information into the set discourse form (a short story), although some students found it difficult to write independently from the wording of the original information.

#### Paper 2

##### Part A – Writing in Hungarian

Questions 2 and 4 were the most popular questions, and only three students attempted Question 3. There were several outstanding responses to Question 4, which asked for a presentation to parents to explain the advantages and disadvantages of the use of computers. In Question 2, students were asked to write an article about life on the planet Mars in 100 years' time.

Students coped well with their chosen topic and performance overall was good. The presentation format in Question 4 was handled well by most students who attempted it, although some had limited control of the discourse form. Some students structured their sentences very well and had a very good vocabulary.

There were some interesting and original responses to Question 2. It gave students a chance to use their imagination and they responded well. Question 1, dealing with the issue of unemployment, drew some responses that showed great depth and maturity of thought.

The standard of spelling ranged from excellent to good with the most common mistakes being the omission of diacritics and the use of 'y' instead of 'j'.

##### Part B – Reorganising written information

Students were required to use information from the two texts provided to write an essay about the significance of Kőrösi Csoma Sándor's life and work.

Students performed well and were able to understand and select relevant information and use it in the required discourse form. Only the best students were able to achieve significant independence from the texts. For the most part, students reorganised the information from the texts but were not able to paraphrase it effectively.

#### Paper 3 – Discussing a theme

##### (completed by interstate students)

Students were asked to respond to one task with reference to one of the two themes they had studied during the year: 'Traditional Celebrations' and 'The War of Independence 1848–1849 in Hungarian Literature'. As in previous years, this part of the examination produced a high standard of writing. There was clear evidence that students were well prepared. Their responses showed good understanding of the themes and were well structured and fluently written.