

GCSE MFL: Examples from Listening and Reading 2019 exam series

The following examples from the *Reports on the exam for 2019* highlight some key issues for teachers for Listening and Reading exams.

Example 1

Spanish Higher Listening

Questions 20-23

Customs and festivals

You are watching a Spanish TV interview with Alejandro Herrera, the organiser of a famous Spanish festival.

What questions does the interviewer ask him? Answer in **English**.

Transcript

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|----|----|---|
| 20 | M1 | ¿Vale la pena gastar todo ese dinero en la fiesta? |
| 21 | M1 | ¿Cuántos visitantes extranjeros vendrán a la ciudad? |
| 22 | M1 | ¿Qué sectores de la economía se beneficiarán más? |
| 23 | M1 | ¿Cómo va usted a solucionar el problema de la basura? |

Comment

The main issue here occurred when students did not read the scene-setting to introduce the question and omitted to notice that the interview was about a festival. We are told that an interviewer is talking to the organiser of a festival so when the word *fiesta* is used, it has that meaning and not that of a party.

Students should always use the question title, the rubric and any examples given to make the context quite clear. In this way, any educated guesswork can be channelled in the correct direction. Many students did not score the mark in Question 20 because they referred to a party.

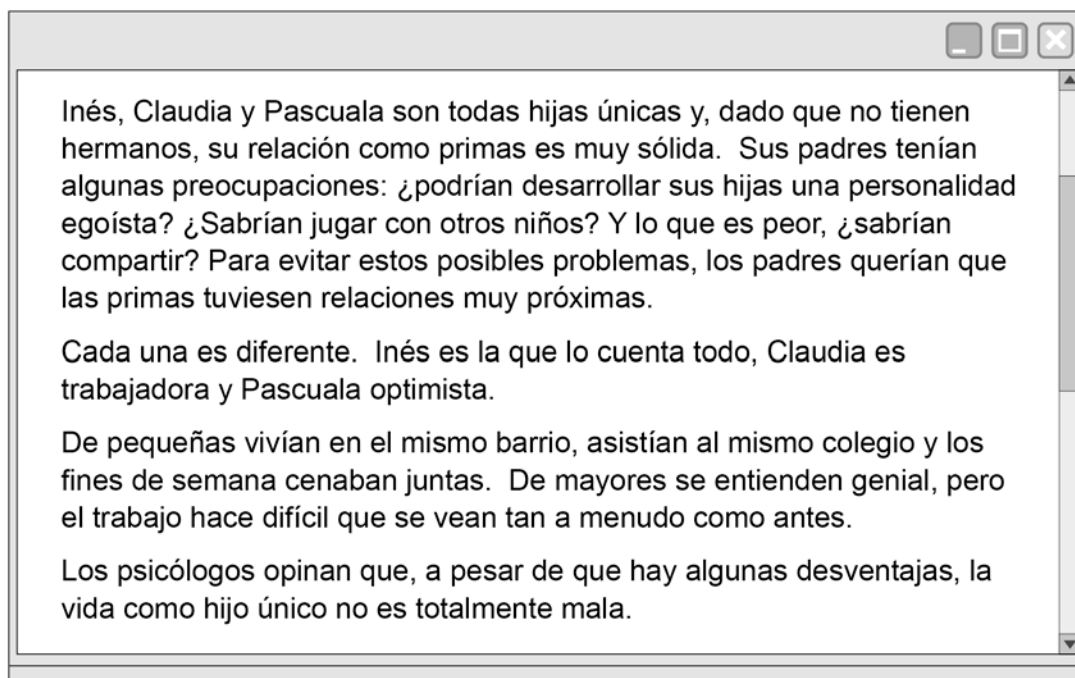
Example 2

Spanish Higher Reading

Question 3

Spanish families

You see this article on a Spanish website.



3.2 What was the parents' greatest concern for their daughters?

[1 mark]

Comment

The most challenging part of Question 3 was part 3.2. When a question asks for the **greatest** concern, examiners are looking for a single answer. Those students who wrote out the list of parental concerns identified by the questions in the text did not get a mark because they had not identified the **key** idea from the many other ideas in the text.

Example 3

German Foundation Reading

Question 13.3

Gesundheit

Ein Reporter spricht mit Jonas über seine Gesundheit.

Lies das Interview und beantworte die Fragen auf **Deutsch**.

Reporter: Was machst du für deine Gesundheit?

Jonas: Als Kind war ich stundenlang an der frischen Luft. Ich war Mitglied eines Segelklubs, obwohl ich nicht so talentiert war. Das hat Spaß gemacht, und ich war fit und gesund. An der Uni hatte ich keine Zeit für Sport und einen sehr ungesunden Lebensstil. Vor kurzem habe ich endlich aufgehört zu rauchen und angefangen, laufen zu gehen. Ich fühle mich jetzt viel besser.

Außerdem versuche ich, während der Woche nicht zu viel Süßes zu essen und trinke meistens Milch. Am Wochenende gehe ich aber oft mit meinen Freunden zum Schnellimbiss.

13.3 Wann isst Jonas gesund?

[1 mark]

Comment

The interrogative form *Wann* clearly challenged many students and those who struggled often wrote eg *Schnellimbiss* which did not answer the question. Students need to be familiar with the question words.

Example 4

French Higher Listening

Question 16

Eating out

On a French website, you find these interviews of people who are reviewing a restaurant.

What **problem** did they have whilst at the restaurant? What was the **reason**?

Complete the boxes in **English**.

1	6
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Problem	Reason

[2 marks]

Transcript

16 **F3** *Et vous, Madame ?*

F1 *D'après le serveur, j'avais choisi le plat le plus populaire sur la carte. J'ai trouvé ça étonnant car ça n'avait aucun goût. Quand j'ai demandé pourquoi, il a répondu qu'ils cuisinaient avec plus d'épices avant.*

Comment

In this question, very few students were able to convey the key idea successfully. The vocabulary tested here was either not known (*goût*) or not identified via communication strategies (*épices*). For example, the word *épices* was often mistaken for 'pieces'.

As stated in the specification, students are required at Higher tier to understand and respond to words and/or forms of words that are not on the vocabulary list and which are less common or familiar than those used in relation to Foundation tier assessments. While *épices* does not feature in the vocabulary list, the adjective *épicé* does appear in the Free-time activities list of vocabulary and so students could be expected to recognise it.

Example 5

French Higher Reading

Section C: Translation

Your sister has seen this comment on an online forum and asks you to translate it for her into **English**.

Je voudrais sortir plus mais il n'y a rien à faire dans ma ville. C'était une région industrielle qui est toujours polluée. On rencontre souvent des sans-abris dans les rues. J'ai décidé de partir après avoir fini mes études. Il me faudra trouver un boulot car je pense voyager à l'étranger.

[9 marks]

Comment

Precision is required in this task. Incorrect translation of tenses and omission of key words such as *plus* in *Je voudrais sortir plus* will result in marks not being awarded. Pronouns also need to be rendered accurately.

Il n'y a rien à faire – 'There's not much to do' was not credited.

car je pense voyager à l'étranger – 'as I want to travel abroad' was not credited.

Example 6

Foundation Tier French Listening Question 24 – Testing negatives

Future plans

Whilst in a café in Montreal, you hear this girl talking on her phone.

Why is she happy? Choose the correct answer and write the letter in the box.

A	She has got a new job.
B	She is going travelling.
C	She is starting university.

[1 mark]

Transcript

*Je suis totalement libre ! Pas de boulot, pas d'études... juste le temps de voyager.
Génial !*

Comment

To access the correct answer (B), students need to take account of the negatives (*pas de*).

Example 7

Higher Tier French Listening Question 1 – Testing comparatives

Ideal partners

On a French reality TV programme about dating, you hear these contestants describe their ideal partners.

What is the **most** important thing for each person when choosing an ideal partner?

Write the correct letter in the box.

A	Common interests
B	Personality
C	Physical appearance
D	Qualifications
E	Sense of style

Transcript

L'aspect physique est moins important que la personnalité. Un partenaire beau mais qui n'a pas le sens de l'humour, non merci !

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[1 mark]

Comment

To access the correct answer (B), students have to understand the comparative (*moins ... que*).

Example 8

German Higher Listening Question 9 – Testing the superlative

Tourism

A student is asking people in a Swiss town about their opinions of tourism.

Answer the questions in **English**.

What does the first person say is the **most** important advantage of tourism?

[1 mark]

Transcript

Entschuldigen Sie. Was halten Sie von Tourismus in der Schweiz?

Der Tourismus ist sehr wichtig für uns, weil er viel Arbeit mit sich bringt, aber für mich ist die Chance, neue Leute und neue Kulturen kennenzulernen das Wichtigste. Ich finde es sehr schön, dass Ausländer unser Land besuchen wollen.

Comment

To gain the mark, students must recognise the superlative form (*das Wichtigste*).

Example 9

French Foundation Tier Reading Question 5 – Testing reading for detail

A train journey

Read this extract from the novel '*Autour du monde en quatre-vingts jours*' by Jules Verne.

Après trois jours en prison, Phileas Fogg remarque le fidèle Passepartout, qui entre dans sa cellule.

Passepartout, souriant, lui annonce d'une voix joyeuse : « Monsieur, vous êtes libre ! Il y a eu une erreur. »

Tout de suite, Fogg et Passepartout vont à la gare de Liverpool. Cinq minutes plus tard, ils prennent le train pour Londres, qui part à l'heure.

Malheureusement, il y a des délais en route.

Fogg, après son long voyage, arrive avec un retard de quelques minutes !

Après tant de dangers, tant de difficultés, il a perdu tout son argent ! Il n'a plus rien.

Decide if the statements are true (T), false (F) or not mentioned (NM). Write T, F or NM in the boxes.

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 The train for London leaves at 5 o'clock.

[1 mark]

Comment

To access the correct answer (NM) students need to do close reading and not link *cinq* in *cinq minutes* with 5 o'clock.

Example 10

German Foundation Tier Reading – Testing reading for detail

Technology

Your Swiss exchange partner has sent you an email.

Reply From...

Subject:

Hallo!

Du kennst Max, meinen besten Freund. Er geht mir auf die Nerven! Ich habe ihn gestern dreimal angerufen und habe die Mailbox bekommen. Er spielt immer am Computer und geht nie an sein Handy!

Wir wollten zusammen ins Sportzentrum gehen, konnten aber nicht. Ich finde es sehr stressig, dass Max lieber vor dem Computer sitzt.

Nächstes Wochenende gehe ich mit meinen Eltern in die Stadt. Sie werden für mich neue Sportschuhe kaufen.

Schreib bald zurück!

Noah

Max ...

A	has lost his mobile phone.
B	never answers Noah's phone calls.
C	spoke to Noah three times yesterday.

[1 mark]

Comment

To access the correct answer (B), students need to read for detail, not immediately choosing the answer that mentions a mobile phone because *Handy* is in the text and not immediately choosing the answer that mentions 'three times', since the text states that Noah called three times but these calls went unanswered by Max.

Example 11

Foundation Tier Spanish Reading Q8 / Higher Tier Q1 - reading for detail

0 8

Vegans in Spain

You are reading about vegans in a Spanish magazine.

Un vegano es una persona que está totalmente en contra de la explotación animal. Hoy es más fácil encontrar restaurantes y bares veganos en España, sobre todo en las grandes ciudades, debido al aumento en el número de veganos en el país.

Ana, vegana desde la edad de 15 años, dice que se siente más sana desde que cambió su dieta. No obstante, Ana no se hizo vegana por motivos de salud. Ana decidió ser vegana porque quería ayudar al medio ambiente. Aunque no le importa no comer huevos y queso, Ana echa de menos la leche.

Which **three** statements are true? Write the correct letters in the boxes.

A	Restaurants in Spain do not serve vegan food.
B	The number of vegans in Spain is growing.
C	Ana has been a vegan for 15 years.
D	Ana feels healthier since becoming vegan.
E	Ana became a vegan for environmental reasons.
F	Ana misses eating cheese.

[3 marks]

Comment

Question 8 was an extended text and a topical subject (veganism). Many students gave C as an (incorrect) answer ('Anna has been a vegan for 15 years') as they were distracted by the reference to *15 años* in the text without understanding '*desde la edad de ...*'

Example 12

Spanish Higher Reading Question 4.2 - Testing reading for detail

Christmas

You are on holiday in Spain for Christmas and read this article in a magazine.

A diferencia de la mayoría de los españoles, que piensan que lo más importante de las fiestas navideñas son las cenas y los regalos, Mónica opina que estas fiestas religiosas son perfectas para ayudar a personas sin recursos, ya que no pueden asistir a reuniones familiares.

La Navidad es una época dura para los sin techo. Además de comida, Mónica les da un regalo: una bufanda o unos guantes. Otros voluntarios les dan bebidas calientes y mantas.

Si quieres ayudar de otras maneras, la organización ofrece plazas de voluntariado para cocineros, repartidores de alimentos y animadores infantiles para hospitales.

Se puede hacer voluntariado online traduciendo documentos a otros idiomas. Puedes también ayudar poniendo tus habilidades al servicio de familias sin recursos, por ejemplo un corte de pelo.

Mónica dice que la experiencia puede ser transformadora y cambiarte por dentro. Trabajar como voluntario es gratificante porque das mucho más de lo que recibes.

0 4 . 2 What does Mónica give to the homeless at Christmas time?

A	Something to eat and drink
B	Something to eat and something to keep them warm
C	Something to drink and a blanket

[1 mark]

Comment

Many answered with option C which was what the other volunteers gave to the homeless, when the question asked what **Mónica** gave them.

Example 13

French Higher Tier Reading Question 8 – Testing inference

Poverty

While on holiday in France, you see a blog on people's attitude to poverty.

Pourquoi est-ce que certaines personnes vivent dans la rue ?

Quel parent ne s'est jamais senti gêné et mal à l'aise face aux questions de son enfant sur la pauvreté ? Il est évident que la pauvreté rend les enfants anxieux.

Comment combattre les idées fausses des enfants ? Par exemple, on entend souvent « les SDF n'ont pas bien travaillé à l'école en dépit de leur talent. » Plein de gens (pas la majorité mais un nombre important, quand même) nourrissent au moins une idée fausse sur la pauvreté comme « les aides monétaires découragent les gens de travailler. »

Il faut expliquer aux enfants les vraies causes de la pauvreté, telles que le divorce, les effets de l'usage de l'alcool et des drogues et, en première ligne, la dépression et les troubles de la personnalité.

Write the correct letter in the box.

0 8. **4** What is the main cause of poverty?

A	Divorce
B	Drug addiction
C	Mental health issues

[1 mark]

Comment

To access the correct answer (C), students must understand the phrase *en premier ligne* and must infer that depression and/or *troubles de la personnalité* are mental health issues.

Example 14

Spanish Higher Tier Reading Question 14.1

Problemas

Ves esta página en una revista española sobre los problemas de salud de unos españoles.

Tengo un problema y necesito ir al médico para solucionarlo. Tengo una dieta equilibrada; tomo poca comida basura, mucha verdura y no bebo alcohol. Sin embargo no consigo perder peso y por eso busco la ayuda del médico.

Rafa

Siempre estoy muy cansada porque, aunque duermo, me es imposible dormir bien. Mis amigos me mandan mensajes durante la noche y me molestan. Mi madre dice que debo apagar el portátil, pero es difícil desconectar.

Carmen

Completa las frases en **español**.

Ejemplo Para solucionar su problema, Rafa debe ...

ir al medico.

1 4 . 1 Rafa **no** come mucha ...

[1 mark]

Comment

Some students copied the words that came after *mucho*, eg *mucha verdura*. This was incorrect. Those who understood the word *poca* got to the correct answer but this did mean reading back from the word *mucho* and only the more able students did this.

Students should be reminded that the correct answer can come after a key word in the question but it can also come **before** the key word as well.