Languages

A Level

German

Exemplar Speaking Responses with Commentaries (Unit F711)

November 2014

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CANDIDATE 1

Role Play A: Blackpool

Grid A. *Use of stimulus*

This candidate scored a very high mark on Grid A. She worked her way chronologically through the Blackpool stimulus material and made an excellent attempt at conveying all the details. She lost only two half marks: Key Point 7, where she did not know *Unterhaltung* and offered *freie live … man kann viel sehen*, and Key Point 14, where her suggested *Familienstück* was not quite precise enough to convey 'show'. Otherwise all the Key Points were dealt with successfully. 14/15

Grid B. *Response to examiner*

Her initial two questions were asked correctly and successfully. During the Role Play she tended to lead the conversation, with minimal input needed from the teacher/examiner. When the teacher/examiner did offer stimuli, the candidate responded immediately and sensibly, if somewhat hesitantly. There was no evidence of initiative or imagination until the final two bullet points, when she impressed with several statements. In answer to the question whether it is better to go on holiday with family or friends, she started with *von mir aus kommt es darauf an, welche Art von Urlaub das ist*, then proceeded to distinguish between relaxing with the family in the country, and city breaks with friends who have the same interests. She had cleverly used part of the preparation time to think about her responses and make some subtle distinctions. Her ideal holiday destination was the large international city of New York. She could have expanded this a little more and suggested what sights she might like to view and why. But her *nach New York fahren … oder fliegen eigentlich* was a nice extra touch of self-correction. Had she been less hesitant and a little more expansive, she could have gained a mark in the highest box. 8/10

Grid C1. *Quality of language*

Her quality of language impressed from the start with *zahlreiche spannende Gelegenheiten*. She had mastered the basics and incorporated an array of ambitious structures into her language. There were numerous instances of subordinate clauses with the verb at the end, such as Parks, *wo man sich entspannen kann / wo man ein Getränk in der Sonne genießen kann / egal, wie alt man ist, damit ich viel Zeit mit meiner Familie verbringen kann*. 'Verb second' idea and 'verb comma verb' (*wenn es klar ist, kann man so weit wie Nord Wales sehen*) caused no problems, and she had good control over the genitive (*eine Kopie des Eiffelturms*). Furthermore, she offered two impressive passives (*ist 1894 geöffnet worden / wo man nach oben gebracht wird*), and she used good vocabulary such as *günstig* and *Aufzug*. Her language was not perfect: adjective endings were inconsistent, and she included some oddities such as *jeden 5 Minuten / beim Tag oder Nacht / ein großen Rad / ein ausgezeichne Blick*. 4/5

Total for Role Play 26/30

CANDIDATE 1

Topic Discussion: *Rauchen*

Grid D. *Ideas, opinions and relevance*

In her chosen topic she dealt with a variety of issues such as smoking in spite of the health culture, cigarette machines and their effect, smoking in restaurants and government attempts to reduce smoking among the young. To support this she was aware of a project in Heidelberg involving a hospital visit which aimed to shock young people into seeing the damage smoking can do. She had at her disposal some statistics on the tobacco ban in public places and at the Oktoberfest. In addition she mentioned her own experiences of the absence of checks in *Nordrheinwestfalen* and her interest in discovering the attempts by the Nazi regime to curb smoking. Throughout the discussion, she offered her own views on this obstinate problem and the efficacy of certain measures to contain it. This discussion was successful – the candidate did not just reel off large numbers of statistics from the internet, but had researched certain aspects of the topic in depth and had selected well-chosen relevant information in support of a highly developed range of ideas. 9/10

Grid E1. *Fluency, spontaneity, responsiveness*

Although there were pauses for thought, she mostly responded promptly and fully to the questions posed, adding extra information and being willing to pursue ideas whenever prompted. She was seriously thoughtful and a little more confident than in the Role Play. The candidate used German naturally, was well prepared but certainly not over prepared, and gave a fluent and spontaneous performance. 9/10

Grid C1. *Quality of language*

The overall standard was similar to that in the Role Play, often a mixture of good, ambitious language interspersed with some errors. Although verb position in subordinate clauses was not always correct, she used *wenn / weil / dass* frequently and demonstrated good use of vocabulary. Her attempts to use subjunctives at appropriate points were also impressive: *weil ich ein Artikel in der Zeitung gelesen habe, das sagte, Deutschland hätte … / weil ich immer dachte, dass die Deutschen sehr gesundheitsbewusst wären / sie sagten, es sei … / von mir aus wäre es viel besser, wenn es ein total Rauchverbot in Deutschland gäbe*. Liberal scatterings of impressive items such as *ohne eingequalmt zu werden / wenn es nicht so viel ... im Restaurant geraucht wird* did much to counterbalance errors of agreement, case and gender. 4/5

Grid G. *Pronunciation, intonation*

Despite her mispronunciation of a few individual words, she was deemed to deserve the highest mark. Pronunciation of almost all sounds was very good and her intonation was excellent. She sounded authentic nearly all of the time, thus deserving 5/5.

Total for Topic 27/30

Total 53/60

CANDIDATE 2

Role Play D: The Greenhill Centre

Grid A. *Use of stimulus*

This candidate scored a reasonable mark on Grid A, but he could have scored a little more. He had a good overview of the stimulus material, but tended to lose half marks (and sometimes whole marks) by not attempting to convey details. In Key Point 1 he mentioned *Zeit verbringen* but not *mehr*, and in Key Point 2 he mentioned 'meeting people' but not 'with the same interests'. In Key Point 7 he cleverly conveyed 'from beginner to advanced' by f*ür jede Fähigkeit*, but did not express the fact that there were various badminton groups. Candidates should be trained to assume that everything in the stimulus material needs to be stated. Key Points 8, 9, 10, 13 and 14 were similar and lacked some detail. For example learning Spanish rather than improving one's Spanish was deemed insufficient to gain the half mark. No attempt was made to express anything in Key Points 3 or 5. Where teachers/examiners recognise that candidates omit some of the information, it is vital to ask further questions, as long as these questions do not provide the information and thereby deny access to marks on Grid A. For Key Point 3, for example, a closed question such as *Gibt es eine gute Auswahl an Aktivitäten da?* would be totally unhelpful, as it provides the information demanded for the first part of the Key Point. But a simple and open question, such as *Was kann man da machen?* might give the candidate the opportunity to supply that information. For Key Point 5, a question from the examiner such as *Was machen die Kleinkinder da?* might have elicited more information and therefore more opportunity for marks. 9/15

Grid B. *Response to examiner*

His initial two questions were correctly framed. From the very start this candidate gave a very sound, confident impression and seemed accustomed to using German as a normal means of communication. He understood examiner questions during the Role Play and responded spontaneously to whatever was asked. When probed about his own personal hobby at the end, he responded with *Freiklettern* and the reasons for his choice. The final extension bullet point was answered well, and he justified his views with reference to children and the importance of friendships at that age. Overall, he responded readily and gave some well-developed answers. 8/10

Grid C1. *Quality of language*

His quality of language was mixed. On the one hand the basics were often sound, with mostly correct control over 'verb second' idea, modals with infinitives at the end and some correct use of subordinate clauses (*wo man Badminton spielen kann / weil ich mich entspanne*). He did try to use some ambitious language and attempted quite a few subordinate clauses, as well as using some impressive items such as *etwas Neues / Fähigkeit / Getränke*. On the other hand his German was peppered with errors such as von *die Himmel / in mein lokales Sportzentrum / als man über drei Uhr dort bleiben kann / Essen und Getränke im Café, die mit lokale Produkten gemacht wurde*. On balance his language was patchy and inconsistent, consequently deserving 3/5.

Total for Role Play 20/30

CANDIDATE 2

Topic Discussion: *Kraftwerk*

Grid D. *Ideas, opinions and relevance*

This candidate undoubtedly showed interest in and enthusiasm for his chosen topic. The conversation correctly proceeded along the lines of the candidate's chosen headings on the Oral Topic Form, and aspects such as the band, one particular song *Autobahn*, influences, the importance of music and the success of German bands in foreign countries were discussed. Enough factual information was heard to justify it as a suitable topic which the candidate had researched to some extent, giving details and demonstrating his knowledge of other groups. In addition, the teacher/examiner asked the candidate for personal responses to this music. He was able to explain ideas and express points of view with some justification. The ideas and opinions did not run at the highest level, but they were good enough to warrant a mark in the 7-8 range. 7/10

Grid E1. *Fluency, spontaneity, responsiveness*

The candidate continued to exude a degree of confidence, and gave a sound, positive performance. There was no undue hesitation, and any pauses were natural pauses for thought in response to unknown questions, with the whole conversation sounding genuine and natural. He was able to keep the momentum going, offering fluent and spontaneous responses most of the time. A successful discussion took place, helped by good examining technique. 8/10

Grid C1. *Quality of language*

This criterion spans both accuracy and range at AS Level. It would be easy to list the considerable errors, with which this candidate's performance is liberally sprinkled, and leave it at that. *Dieses Band / ein Mitglieder von der Band, deren Name ich vergessen habe / klassisches Musik / wenn sie eine Band begründet / von dieses Musikart* are just some examples of the errors we hear. However, this ignores the many instances of attempted ambitious language (*dass es nicht typisch ist / Jazzgeige, die sehr berühmt in Frankreich war*) also scattered freely in his language. There are numerous examples of subordinate clauses with the verb correctly placed at the end of the clause and with the correct agreement, even though this is not invariably the case. This generally correct use of complex structures helps him raise the quality of language mark to 4/5.

Grid G. *Pronunciation, intonation*

His pronunciation was judged to have been generally accurate. Although he made some errors with individual items such as in *anderen Landen / sterk* (instead of *stark*) etc, most of what he said sounded authentic and his intonation was generally good. 4/5.

Total for Topic 23/30

Total 43/60

CANDIDATE 3

Role Play C: Luigi's Ices

Grid A. ***Use of stimulus***

This candidate scored a middling mark on Grid A, with many of the Key Points gaining half a mark. The full mark could only be awarded for Key Points 11, 12 and 15. Often she conveyed some of the required information, but omitted some necessary detail such as 'super' in Key Point 1, 'all over' in KP5, 'communicate with customers' in KP6, 'ready' in KP7 and 'delicious/Italian' in KP10. At times her attempts to convey the information were too weak to allow the half mark to be awarded, as with *die Familie ankäme seit 50 Jahren in KP3, sechs Komma fünfzig Euro in KP9*. The examiner recognised that this candidate had not mentioned 'training' and tried to elicit this information with the question *Muss ich vielleicht ein bisschen Ausbildung haben?* Unfortunately this supplied one of the key words and, because the candidate repeated the word *Ausbildung*, she could not be awarded this half mark. If she had manipulated the language and responded with the word *Trainingkurs* (or equivalent), then she could have scored this half mark. Only KP4 scored nought, as neither 'business' nor 'single van' were mentioned. In total she scored 8½ marks, rounded up to 9/15.

Grid B. ***Response to examiner***

Both initial questions were good. The answer to the second initial question is always meant as a lead-in to the candidate starting to explain the stimulus material. This candidate seemed not to recognise this and started commenting on her own lack of part-time job, but the examiner soon got her back on track. During the Role Play she understood the examiner's questions and duly responded, although somewhat hesitantly as she worked out the answer. There were a couple of examples of initiative, such as the slightly contrived *ein Angebot, das sie sich nicht entgehen lassen können* and *die Möglichkeiten sind endlos*. Her responses to the extension bullet points were sound rather than elaborate or expansive, and her hesitancy was also noticeable. 6/10

Grid C1. ***Quality of language***

Her quality of language was an interesting mix. The basics were inconsistent: sometimes she seemed to be in control, yet at other times she made errors with agreement and verb forms (*aber im Moment keine Zeit haben / wenn ich Zeit hätten / ein Arbeit in einige Luigi Eiswagen / haben es angefangt / die Bewerber muss freundlich sein / sie haben ihren normalerweise Plätzen*). On occasion she started a sentence and simply forgot the verb at the end: *ich denke, dass es eine tolle Sommerarbeit für Menschen, die 17 sind / die Arbeit wird* … (no infinitive at the end) / *das würde sehr gut* … (no infinitive at the end). However, her language was rewarded for its attempts at ambitious structures, such as relative clauses, subjunctives and the following: *wenn Sie viel Eis verkaufen / weil ich viel Geld verdienen könnte / je mehr Sie verkaufen, desto mehr Sie verdienen*. 3/5

Total for Role Play 18/30

CANDIDATE 3

Topic Discussion: *Essen und Gesundheit*

Grid D. *Ideas, opinions and relevance*

This was a broad topic and the discussion covered a wide range of ideas from fitness, insomnia, the importance of breakfast, a balanced diet, dairy products and vitamins to vegetarianism and obesity. With so many aspects to cover there is a danger that the conversation might remain on a very superficial level. This candidate avoided this danger. She went beyond vague and generalised information: she had researched the topic and had a number of statistics at her disposal to justify her initial statements. In addition, she was able to respond when the examiner asked her for her own opinions. When asked about a balanced diet she mentioned the importance of *Eiweiß*, and *Kohlenhydrat* present in *Brot und Nudeln*. Challenged as to why dairy products are good, she responded that they contain calcium, which is necessary for bones and growth, especially for children *weil sie in einer Entwicklungsstufe sind*. Another danger is that the topic might not refer to Germany, but on numerous occasions she quoted statistics and percentages relating to what Germans consume or how they compare with other countries. She offered relevant information and was able to develop and express ideas. 7/10

Grid E1. *Fluency, spontaneity, responsiveness*

The hesitancy encountered in the Role Play continued in the Topic Discussion. There was frequently a marked contrast between her initial statements (which are to some extent prepared, as this is her chosen topic and she has sensibly done some research on it) and her responses to good examiner questions. Here she hesitated a little as she thought how to respond. She was certainly spontaneous, but the spontaneity was not all that fluent. 6/10

Grid C1. *Quality of language*

With some candidates, the quality of language does not improve in the Topic Discussion. This candidate certainly did improve. There were countless examples of subordinate clauses with the verb at the end after conjunctions such as *dass / weil / wenn / so dass / da*. She used *um … zu* several times, and also relative clauses, subjunctives (*meiner Ansicht nach wäre es schwer…*) and a passive (*Vitamin C wird in Früchten gefunden*). Other structures (*der Forschung zufolge / meines Erachtens / sonst leidet man an der Schlaflosigkeit*) and some good vocabulary also impressed. On the negative side, she still made errors (*weil man könnte Gesundheitprobleme vermeiden / ich denke, dass das sehr hohe sind / weil es Krankheit vermieden wird / wenn sie Vegetarier bekämen / junge Leute ... leidet unter … / weil Personen sollen ihren Körper mag*). On balance, she demonstrated more correct than incorrect usage. This and the large number of instances of ambitious structures placed her firmly in the 4/5 bracket.

Grid G. *Pronunciation, intonation*

We could understand all she said and her intonation was reasonable. The German z was impure, as was the r sound. Individual words such as *Deiät / Ernahrung / ungefahr / Fettliebigkeit* (sic) were often weak, and (*Gehirn*)*funktion* sounded English. 3/5.

Total for Topic 20/30

Total 38/60

CANDIDATE 4

Role Play B: This Week

Grid A. ***Use of stimulus***

This candidate was not able to score highly on Grid A. With many of the Key Points he did not mention enough detail, or what he mentioned was not precise enough. He was only able to achieve the full mark with two of the fifteen Key Points (7 and 11). No marks could be given for his attempts to express Key Points 4, 6, 9 and 13. The second half mark in KP4 was supplied by the teacher/examiner (*darum soll man This Week lesen*), as was the whole of KP13 (*damit man so etwas selbst schreiben kann*). In many cases, this candidate gave some of the information, but not all that was required. For instance, in KP10 he stated *man kann deine Meinungen … schrieben*, but did not mention the 'own' required by the mark scheme. Similarly, he mentioned the gift card in KP12 but offered no word for 'attractive'. All the other Key Points gained half a mark, totalling 6½, rounded up to. 7/15.

Grid B. ***Response to examiner***

Both initial questions were well expressed. The stimulus material was dealt with in chronological order, but there was little if any attempt at initiative or imagination before the end. The teacher/examiner's attempts en route to involve the candidate in comment did not provoke any real responses apart from agreement, and the candidate did not lead the conversation. The final extension bullet points, especially the second one, produced more of a response, although that faded somewhat after the candidate had stated what he had prepared. This was a short Role Play at less than four minutes, and there would have been time to expand. On balance, a mark in the middle box was deemed suitable, as the candidate responded satisfactorily but gave an inconsistent performance. 6/10

Grid C1. ***Quality of language***

The quality of language was also inconsistent. On several occasions the candidate showed that he not only knew the basics but could also manipulate impressive language: *ein gutes Geschenk für Personen, die ein beschäftiges Leben haben / ich meine, dass die Zeitung mich am besten informieren kann, aber für andere Personen, die kein Zeit haben, werde es nicht so gut sein*. As such, he seemed to be heading for a mark of 4. But error crept in with examples such as *eine Anziege / wenn man nicht genug Zeit habe*, and consequently his mark by the end of the Role Play was solidly in the middle box at 3/5.

Total for Role Play 16/30

CANDIDATE 4

Topic Discussion: *Sport und Gesundheit*

Grid D. *Ideas, opinions and relevance*

His chosen topic (also too short at 7½ minutes) followed the headings on the Oral Topic Form correctly and the discussion dealt with various aspects of the topic including the advantages and disadvantages of sport, the fitness of Germans, the popularity of sport, its importance for children and the candidate's own involvement. Some factual evidence was offered and some statistics given as to the percentage of Germans who were completely healthy and how many were members of sports clubs. The candidate knew of the *fit statt fett* programme and quoted the opinions of a professor found on *Deutsche Welle*, although more details could have been provided. The level of ideas and opinions was judged to be in the middle box. Whilst he did not have difficulty communicating factual information, he did not develop and explain ideas to any great extent, nor was there a wide range of ideas. 6/10

Grid E1. *Fluency, spontaneity, responsiveness*

The conversation was genuinely spontaneous but lacked fluency at times. The candidate tended to make statements and then wait for the intervention of the teacher/examiner. He understood everything the examiner asked and responded to prompts, although hesitantly at times and without expanding much on his original statements. The impression left by the end (of both Role Play and Topic Discussion) was of a somewhat uncommunicative candidate who did not naturally develop the discussion, but who managed to get through what to him was something of an ordeal. 6/10

Grid C1. *Quality of language*

The inconsistency first heard in the Role Play was repeated in the Topic Discussion: some ambitious language and attempts at complex sentence structures (*Menschen, die Sport treiben, leiden weniger unter Stress*), counterbalanced by some basic errors (*jeden Woche / weil es ein wichtig Teil*…). There were many instances of subordinate clauses introduced by *dass*, *wenn* and *weil* with the verb sent correctly to the end of the clause. Verb position was often good, but verb agreement and verb forms were less impressive: *die Ausrüstung viel Geld kosten können / kann es seinen Blutdruck reduziert*. 'Verb second' idea and 'verb comma verb' were frequently correct but not consistently so. Sometimes a mixture of these stronger and weaker elements were combined in the same sentence: *die meisten Deutschen meine, dass Sport immer gesund ist / … , dass Sport kann gefährlich sein, wenn man zu viel Sport treibt*. 3/5

Grid G. *Pronunciation, intonation*

Pronunciation of individual words was acceptable for the most part, but the z and r invariably sounded English rather than German. Intonation was not a strength. 3/5.

Total for Topic 18/30

Total 34/60

CANDIDATE 5

Role Play A: Blackpool

Grid A. *Use of stimulus*

This candidate did not score a high mark on Grid A, partly through imprecision and partly through omission. He was only able to achieve both half marks on three of the fifteen Key Points (5, 6 and 12). No marks were awarded for his attempts with Key Points 3, 4, and 7. All others gained half a mark, totalling 7½, which was rounded up to 8/15.

Grid B. *Response to examiner*

His first initial question *Ob würdest du im Sommer einen Familienurlaub machen?* was incorrectly phrased. The teacher/examiner sensibly did not correct him, but answered and waited for the second question, which was a little better. During the Role Play it was she who tended to lead the conversation, with minimal input coming from the candidate. The teacher/examiner tried to keep the conversation going, but the candidate often seemed hesitant. Twice she was asked by the candidate to repeat a straightforward question. Sometimes it was only through encouraging questions (e.g. *Kann man was essen oder trinken?*) that the candidate was able to gain some of the half marks on Grid A. At one point she asked *Kann man am Strand essen?*, which prevented the candidate from scoring the second half mark on Key Point 3. Later, the question *Kann man weit sehen?* would have been better phrased as *Was kann man oben machen?* The extension questions did not provoke any initiative or imagination. Holidays with family are better *weil* … (long pause) *du deine Freunden immer sehen*. The final extension question was answered by the one word *Skifahren*, possibly because the Role Play had already exceeded its recommended time allocation. 4/10

Grid C1. *Quality of language*

His quality of language was not impressive. He struggled with some of the basics and had little awareness of 'verb second' idea. Sometimes he started sentences including a modal, but forgot the infinitive at the end. He did attempt one subordinate clause (*wenn es sehr schön … Sonne ist*), but there were numerous examples of incorrect use over a variety of structures (e.g. *es ist sehr beliebtest / für der Café / wo man kann ein sehr schöne Trinken in der Sonn / der Zentrum-Seebrücke / Aktivitäts / für der Menschen von jeder Alter / im Mittag*). 2/5

Total for Role Play 14/30

NB: *Please beware that care should be taken to ensure that the official time limits are observed.*

The Role Play should not exceed 6 minutes.

CANDIDATE 5

Topic Discussion: *Soziale Netzwerke*

Grid D. *Ideas, opinions and relevance*

His chosen topic contained some information and statistics on the number of internet users in Germany, their average age, German users of Facebook and a particular *uTuber* in Germany. Towards the end of the conversation, cyberbullying, the Stasi and the antisocial aspect of using computers were mentioned. However, little of depth was discussed and little expanded. He had done some research, but it was very minimal and contained some repetition. Much of what he said deserved to be in the 3-4 box, showing a limited ability to develop or explain ideas. He managed to edge into the box above, but only just. The final impression was that there was little merit or depth in the chosen topic and little real relevance to Germany. 5/10

Grid E1. *Fluency, spontaneity, responsiveness*

This was not a fluent and spontaneous performance. The hesitancy heard in the Role Play continued, and there were frequent sentences where he made a start, then paused for thought, started again, repeated or simply failed to complete the sentence. Long pauses demonstrated his weaknesses, both in terms of content and preparation. The very few occasions where he completed a rounded sentence (e.g. *rund 30% der Menschen von Deutschland werden von Cybermobbing betroffen*) were vastly outweighed by innumerable sentences lacking fluent delivery. 4/10

Grid C1. *Quality of language*

The poor control of linguistic structures heard in the Role Play was repeated in the Topic Discussion. There were a few occasions where 'verb second' idea and even a verb at the end of a subordinate clause appeared, but the vast majority of what this candidate uttered demonstrated frequent errors of an elementary kind. There was much evidence of gaps in basic grammar, and vocabulary and structures were quite strongly influenced by English (e.g. *junge Leute machen die sozial Netzwerke für … zu in Kontakt zu steht*). Sometimes the meaning was unclearly expressed: *wenn man Cybermobbing ist, … sie sind … empfindlich sich selbst geistig bei und körperlich gewöhnen sind*. 2/5

Grid G. *Pronunciation, intonation*

Despite his limited German, this candidate did produce some acceptable language. There were some mispronunciations of individual words such as *wahrend* and *Bevolkerung*, but on the whole his sounds were recognisable, if not always pure. 3/5.

Total for Topic 14/30

Total 28/60

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