

Examiners' Report/
Principal Examiner Feedback

Summer 2013

GCE Spanish (6SP01)
Unit 1 Spoken Expression and Response

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General Introduction

The assessment for Unit 1 is divided into two sections – A and B, and lasts between 8-10 minutes.

In section A students are required to respond to four Edexcel-set questions on a stimulus related to a student's chosen general topic area. The first two questions will relate directly to the content of the stimulus card and the second two questions will invite the student to give opinions or react to the general topic of the stimulus.

In section B the teacher/examiner is required to engage the students in a discussion which, although relating to the same general topic area and its linked sub-topics, moves away from the main focus of the stimulus.

Assessment Principles

The test is assessed positively out of 50 marks using the grid printed in the specification (1.4, p. 24 and p. 25). Marks are awarded across five assessment criteria; Quality of Language (Accuracy) 8 marks, Quality of language (Range) 8 marks, Response 20 marks, Understanding (stimulus specific) 4 marks, Understanding (General topic area) 10 marks.

Students' Responses

Examiners reported that there were some good examples of excellent teacher examining. In general teacher/examiners have clearly read and interpreted the requirements outlined in the oral training guide responding well to advice and guidance given in previous published reports to centres. The majority of students responded well to the demands of the examination and had a good understanding of the requirements. Most performed very well and some discussions were excellent. The more able students had clearly carried out relevant research and referred to this in their discussions. They spoke with confidence and demonstrated a clear understanding of their chosen topic area. The standard of performance by teachers and students was generally very high.

In order to succeed in this unit, students must prepare well for the test as well as demonstrate a sound knowledge of language appropriate to AS level. However, teacher/examiners should be aware that success in this test is also determined in part by outcome. The teacher/examiners' approach to questioning during the test is crucial.

Teacher/examiners are reminded again this series of the need to ask students an appropriate level and range of questions that will enable them to respond by showing their full linguistic potential. A significant improvement has been noted this series. Nevertheless a cautionary reminder to teacher/examiners is deemed appropriate and full details are contained in the sections below

Section A

All students had clearly prepared their stimulus well. They generally anticipated the four Edexcel-set questions well and demonstrated an understanding of the content of the oral stimulus in their answers to the first two questions in Section A. In their analysis of students' performance this summer, examiners frequently referred to instances where students did not provide all the relevant information required in questions 1 and 2 as included in the stimulus texts. In such instances, although in the minority, students were not able to achieve the full 4 marks available for this section of the task which requires "*full and detailed answers*" to questions. In a couple of instances, examiners noted that teacher/examiners had missed out one question, and several noted that students provided irrelevant personal opinions and examples in response to questions 1 and 2, which could not be rewarded.

The majority of students made an attempt to manipulate language of the stimulus and select information appropriate to the question being asked. However some students, and not always the weaker ones, simply read the whole paragraph. Whilst direct lifts from the stimulus card in students' responses are acceptable, it is important for teacher/examiners

to note these must answer the questions set. It is not sufficient for students to simply read out long sections from the stimulus material. Students do need to ensure that they have demonstrated their understanding of the precise questions set. It is most unlikely that students will achieve success without expanding, explaining and developing the content of their responses beyond the given text. A high number of students manipulated just one or two words from the paragraphs and lifted whole sentences, reading from the stimulus.

Most teacher/examiners read all four questions including the "¿Por qué (no)?", as is required. Although there were a few instances of questions being forgotten and repeated unnecessarily, which might have confused the students.

Overall student performance was very pleasing. The very best were able to manipulate language from the stimulus and expand, explain and develop the content of their responses, without including irrelevant pre-learnt personal information. Weaker students were generally well supported by their teachers. Some very good examples noted by examiners are illustrated below.

General Topic Area: Youth Culture and Concerns
Stimulus card 1A - El Alcoholismo aumenta en los menores

1. *¿Qué actividades sociales hay para los jóvenes donde tú vives?*

Si eres una persona sociable hay muchas oportunidades. Por ejemplo en mi barrio hay un centro comunitario donde pueden conocer a gente de todas las edades, porque hay un coro y también organizan carreras en el parque y rifas para sacar dinero para el hospicio local. En Navidad hacen una pantomima u un concurso de pasteles. Para los que sean deportistas hay mucha gente paseando al perro, jugando con niños y haciendo un picnic. Los sábados hay un mercado con varios puestos y siempre puedes hablar con la gente y enterrarte de lo que pasa En la biblioteca hay un grupo de lectura. Luego también hay lo típico: bares o restaurantes pero para eso necesitan dinero. .

Other good examples of manipulation included:

- *Adolescentes → jóvenes*
- *Menores → niños pequeños*
- *Hospitales → centros médicos*
- *Salud → sanidad*
- *Trastornos → problemas*
- *Peligros → riesgos, consecuencias dañinas*
- *Admitidos en hospitales → hospitalizados*
- *Una aumento → una subida, un incremento*
- *Se ve → enseña, muestra*

General Topic Area: Youth Culture and Concerns
Stimulus card 2A & 2B - Mas amigos virtuales que en la vida 'real'

1. *¿Qué nos demuestra la investigación mencionada en el primer párrafo?*

Las personas que navegan la red tienen dos veces más amigos en la red que en la vida real.

4. (2B) *En tu opinión, ¿Cuáles son los peligros de tener amigos virtuales?*

"Puede ser muy peligroso si los amigos se convierten en tus únicos amigos porque esas personas no son siempre lo que tú crees que son y puede ser un engaño total, no sólo porque pueden haber creado una persona imaginaria, sino también porque tú puedes perder el contacto con la vida real. Los amigos físicos son reales. Los amigos virtuales pueden ser o no ser."

General Topic Area: Lifestyle: Health and Fitness

Stimulus card: 1A and 1B - *El matrimonio es bueno para la salud*

3. (1A) *En tu opinión, ¿Cuáles son los beneficios de casarse o cohabitar?*

“Seguramente el matrimonio ofrece más estabilidad social y personal y si lo que quieres es tener hijos, hay más posibilidad de que tus niños se críen seguros y felices. Tal vez el compromiso es mayor si la pareja está casada. Yo he leído que los hombres casados tienen más éxito profesional porque el matrimonio le hace tener más confianza en sí mismos. En realidad depende del tipo de sociedad y país en que vives. Si es tradicional lo mejor es casarse y así padres y abuelos están contentos.”

There were some good attempts to offer equivalents:

- *vivir más tiempo* → *tener una vida más larga*
- *los que cohabitan* → *los que viven en una relación de pareja sentimental*
- *probabilidad* → *mayor posibilidad*
- *morir* → *fallecer*

General Topic Area: Lifestyle: Health and Fitness

Stimulus card: 2A & 2B - *La anorexia: cada vez más una cosa de niños*

Good examples of manipulation included:

- *menores* → *los más pequeños*
- *sufren* → *padecen*
- *rechazan la comida* → *se niegan a comer/no quieren comer*
- *genéticos* → *los genes*
- *expresar sus sentimientos* → *manifestar/canalizar*
- *se incrementaron* → *aumentaron/crecieron*
- *influir* → *afectar*
- *manera* → *forma*

General Topic Area: World Around Us

Stimulus card: 1A & 1B - *Campaña del huevo frito para fomentar el uso del metro*

Some good examples of manipulation included:

- *Inversión* → *gastar más dinero*
- *Persuadir* → *animar*
- *Escapar* → *librarse del calor*

General Topic Area: World Around Us

Stimulus card: 2A and 2B - *Ciudades: los mayores contaminantes del planeta*

Some good examples of manipulation included:

- *territorio* → *superficie, extensión*
- *emisiones* → *producción, descarga de gases*
- *centros urbanos* → *ciudades*
- *acción humana* → *actividad de los hombres*
- *consume* → *gasta*
- *generar* → *producir*
- *sólo* → *solamente*
- *viviendas* → *casas*

General Topic Area: Education and Employment

Stimulus card: 1A and 1B - *Protestas contra las matrículas universitarias*

Some good examples of language manipulation:

- *recortar* → *reducir*
- *presupuestos* → *fondos*
- *triplicar* → *tres veces más*
- *precio* → *coste*
- *matriculas* → *tasas*
- *tener una deuda* → *acumular una deuda*
- *furiosos* → *indignados*
- *recursos* → *medios económicos/dinero*
- *seguirán teniendo* → *van a continuar recibiendo*
- *argumenta* → *defiende*
- *medidas esenciales* → *cruciales*

General Topic Area: Education and Employment

Stimulus card: 2A and 2B – *El desempleo y la crisis económica*

Some good examples of manipulation included:

- *muy pesimista* → *están muy preocupados/no tienen esperanza/no tienen perspectivas/ven el panorama muy negro*
- *salarios* → *sueldos*
- *más grande* → *mayor*
- *horarios extensos* → *muchas horas*
- *cambiar de país* → *irse al extranjero*
- *conseguir* → *encontrar*

Suitability of stimulus cards chosen by students

All stimulus cards proved accessible to all students and most demonstrated a good understanding of their content. As anticipated, the two most popular topics continue to be 'Youth Culture and Concerns' and 'Lifestyle: Health and Fitness', in this order.

However the general topic area of 'Education and Employment' has, according to some examiners, overtaken the topic of 'World Around Us' in its popularity this series. Centres are reminded that the students should, wherever possible, be given a free choice to choose the general topic area to suit their learning, strengths and interests. For example, it was noted that in one centre, (whose students were all adults), the topic chosen for all students was 'Youth Culture and Concerns'. The majority of the students understandably showed a lack of knowledge about current youth culture and affairs. Some even answered, "*no sé lo que hacen los jóvenes*" on several occasions.

Overall students had clearly been well prepared for this part of the test and had recognised that questions 1 and 2 related to the content of the text. In all cases the better students were able to manipulate the language of the stimulus and further develop their responses with detailed examples and explanations.

Examiners' specific comments related to each of the stimuli

The setting of stimulus materials requires an even number of detail, (max. 6) for answers to questions 1 and 2.

Youth Culture and Concerns - stimulus 1A & 1B

El alcoholismo aumenta en los menores

- Question 1: Not all points were covered by many students, especially failing to mention the hospital admissions and the girls.
- Question 2: Some students interpreted the causes in their own way and did not refer to the answer in the stimulus. Some students spoke about television, models and advertising but did not mention how they presented alcohol.

- Question 3: Most students answered in the positive but repeated the ideas from their answer to question 2.
- Question 4 (1A) Many students simply gave a list of places and returned to mentioning alcohol as a source of entertainment.
- In Question 4 (1B) – a fair number of students focussed on alcohol and failed to mention other factors such as consumer pressures, fashion, music, peer pressure, expectations.
- The numbers caused problems, eg; *doce*, and the word “per cent”.

Youth Culture and Concerns – stimulus 2A & 2B

Más amigos virtuales que en la vida ‘real’

- Very few students covered all the points in response to question 1, often failing to mention how social networks are changing the way people get to know each other and how one in ten find their best friend through these sites.
- There was some difficulty with “*al menos dos horas*”, and with the pronunciation of “*socializar*” which was often pronounced as “*socialar*”.
- In response to question 3 (2A), there was a lot of information borrowed from the stimulus.
- In response to question 3 (2B), many found little to say about what information is placed on these sites, which was surprising. Many simply referred to what they use the sites for.
- “*Usuarios*” was often mispronounced as “*usarios*”.

Lifestyle, Health and Fitness – stimulus 1A & 1B

El matrimonio es bueno para la salud

Students were, on the whole, happy to talk about marriage and relationships. The responses to this stimulus were very good. There was evidence on occasions of carelessness where students missed covering all points in their responses. Examiners noted that the idea of support and sharing responsibilities was often missed out in response to question 2. Although most students gave brief answers to the question relating to the ideal age to marry, some interesting answers were heard which related to maturity, love, stability of the relationship and/or a job and financial independence. Some students did not understand “*edad ideal*” or “*cohabitar*”.

Lifestyle, Health and Fitness – stimulus 2A & 2B

La anorexia: cada vez más una cosa de niños

Due to the randomisation of sequencing of cards, a large number of students appeared to receive this card. Most were familiar with the topic and the general sense of the stimulus. However, many missed out important information in their responses such as, for question 1, this is now a condition that not only affects teenagers. In response to question 2, many students missed out the point that food is used by some children to express their feelings.

The main misunderstanding and irrelevance in response to question 1 related to the percentage, 40%. Some students offered answers such as, “*el 40% de las personas que van a consultas médicas por anorexia son menores de 12 años*” instead of “*el número de jóvenes menores de 12 años que han visitado el médico por causa de la anorexia se ha visto incrementado en un 40%*”.

In response to question 3 (2A), “*¿qué factores influyen en la dieta?*”, some students repeated information from the stimulus, and one person suggested giving sweets to children if they ate vegetables.

There were some very good answers to question 3 (2B), “*¿por qué se obsesionan muchos jóvenes con controlar su peso?*”. Students made reference to fashion, society’s pressures and peer pressure, and the importance of having a slim and attractive figure.

Some students missed the idea of "*otros problemas*" in response to question 4 (2B) and did not move away from eating disorders.

The World Around Us – stimulus 1A & 1B
Campaña del huevo frito para fomentar el uso del metro

Few students chose this topic area and the more able appeared to do so, according to examiners.

Students were able to describe the action of frying an egg on the cars but few explained the connection with air conditioning/heat.

Questions 3 and 4 did not pose any problems and it is interesting to note the criticism for public transport generally.

In response to question 4 (1B), answers were not generally focussed on the impact of their own actions and related more to schools and Governments and mentioned vaguely about recycling and turning off lights.

The World Around Us – stimulus 2A & 2B
Ciudades: los mayores contaminantes del planeta

There were some good responses to this stimulus although a very small number chose this topic area. Points were well covered for this stimulus and language was generally well manipulated. Examiners noted some mature students who had clearly researched the topic well.

However, in response to question 3 (2A), examiners were disappointed not to hear more interesting ideas for making our homes more efficient, such as energy saving measures, installation of solar panels, double glazing, roof installation, efficient central heating systems and appliances, recycling rain water, retaining gardens instead of paving them, etc.

Education and Employment – stimulus 1A & 1B
Protestas contra las matriculas universitarias

Examiners noted that this topic area appeared more often this series than previously. It would appear that some teachers/students had chosen this topic area in preference to 'World Around Us'. This sub-topic was very relevant and students generally demonstrated good knowledge about the current situation. For example, in question 1, many students did not mention the idea of "*recortar los presupuestos*".

Not all students differentiated well between the effect it will have on the rich and those with less money. Many students also missed out the point that the money was seen as essential to protect the future of universities. Some students, although able, read whole paragraphs in response to this question.

All students were against the rise in fees but supported the need to go to University to find a good job. Generally they appeared not to be critical of the way education was delivered, syllabuses, resources available and few suggested changes. Students elaborated well on the alternatives to University and some suggested that the country needed training programmes for practical jobs: plumbers, electricians, plasterers, gardeners and shop keepers. Many students acknowledged an awareness of the serious unemployment situation particularly in Spain for young people but few showed real concern as they saw it too far off into the future.

Education and Employment – stimulus 2A/1B
El desempleo y la crisis económica

Due to the randomisation of sequencing there were very few examples of this stimulus card. Most students were able to answer all questions and this card was felt to be relevant and topical. Some students found question 3 (2A) more challenging: "*qué*

deben hacer los jóvenes para conseguir trabajo" and some reverted to information from the stimulus.

In response to question 4 for both card 2A and 2B a lot of students referred to the skill of speaking another language, which was pleasing to note.

Section B

Most teacher examiners asked interesting and relevant questions based on students' chosen topic areas and listened to given responses in order to develop a natural discussion. In addition, teachers/examiners gave their students ample opportunity to show their knowledge. They were sympathetic to the differing needs and abilities of their students.

It is acceptable to ask one transitional question to smoothly move away from the sub-topic of the stimulus card. However, some teacher/examiners took too long to move into other areas. It was noted that some Section B questions did not relate at all to students' chosen topic areas and, as a consequence, marks would have been restricted for 'Understanding' of the topic area.

Furthermore, in a minority of cases, there was continued evidence that teacher/examiners were randomly selecting a set of pre-ordained questions. When teachers ask the same set of questions to all students, (even if the order is different) the spontaneous and unpredictable element is missing and this would be reflected in a lower mark for 'Response'.

It is important to listen to students and 'react' to what they are saying. There must also be a link between the questions in order for the test to be a conversation. The mark scheme mentions "discourse" (i.e. discussion) and this entails a dialogue between two people who should react to one another. Furthermore, the temptation to ask lots of questions should be avoided since this does not constitute a dialogue or discussion.

There must be an element of 'thinking on one's feet' so that the test does not become either a student's monologue or a series of questions fired in the student's direction. In addition, when teacher/examiners introduce too many topics, students have little opportunity to develop their ideas and opinions, and they would not score high marks in 'Understanding' of general topic area.

Personal questions about hobbies, activities, holidays and future plans are not suitable for AS examination and lend themselves more to the GCSE examination. Questions must be more challenging and focussed on students' chosen general topic areas. The questions and responses in this test must show progression from GCSE.

In some cases, examiners felt that this had not happened and students' performances were restricted due to the type of questions they had been asked. A GCSE approach gives the student no benefit because they cannot score high marks in 'Response' and 'Understanding' of General Topic Area.

Some examples this series of GCSE-type questions versus more AS-type questions appear in the box below:

An example of an oral assessment with too many topics and many GCSE-type and closed questions

General Topic Area: Youth culture and concerns

- ¿Te gusta la moda?
- ¿Qué tipo de moda te gusta?
- ¿Es importante la música para ti?
- ¿Tienes algún grupo favorito?
- ¿Te dan tus padres mucha libertad?
- ¿Cómo gastas tu dinero?

- ¿Sabes que es el botellón? Háblame un poco..
- ¿Usas mucho la tecnología?
- ¿Explica que es internet?
- ¿Podrías vivir sin tu móvil?
- ¿Por qué fuman tanto los jóvenes?
- ¿Y el alcohol, es un problema?
- ¿Tus amigos toman drogas?
- ¿Qué recomendarías a un amigo que toma drogas?
- ¿Sabes qué es el sexo seguro?
- ¿A qué edad deben empezar?
- ¿Es buena la televisión en tu país?
- ¿Qué cualidades debe tener un amigo?
- ¿Puedes ser feliz sin amigos?

Example of GCSE-type questions that are not suitable for AS assessment

- ¿Qué tipo de vacaciones prefieres?
- ¿Cuál es tu grupo favorito?
- ¿Tocas algún instrumento musical?
- ¿Prefieres ir a conciertos o escuchar música en un CD?
- ¿Prefieres viajar con tu familia o con tus amigos?
- ¿Te llevas bien con tu familia?
- ¿Qué deportes practicas?
- ¿Usas tu teléfono móvil mucho?
- ¿Hay algún tipo de música que no te guste?
- ¿Tienes una dieta sana?
- ¿Qué haces para llevar una vida sana?

Example of an appropriate AS assessment: Section B Youth Culture and Concerns

- ¿Qué valores tienen los jóvenes de hoy?
- ¿Cómo choca esta forma de ver la vida con la de los adultos?
- ¿Qué tipo de conflictos puede crear?
- ¿Qué sugerirías para resolverlos?
- ¿A qué presiones sociales o familiares están sometidos los jóvenes?
- ¿Qué papel tiene el alcohol o las drogas en el entretenimiento de los jóvenes?

Examples of two well-structured oral tests – Section B Education and Employment

A

- reformas educativas en la enseñanza secundaria
- calidad de la enseñanza en los colegios
- prejuicios y desigualdad en los colegios
- enseñanza privada o pública
- como aprovechar de la tecnología en clase

B

- el trabajo ideal
- dificultad de encontrar trabajo –desempleo
- discriminación en el trabajo
- la mujer y madre en el trabajo

Interesting and more challenging AS-type questions to extend the more able students:

- ¿Es posible encontrar un equilibrio entre el trabajo y la vida social?
- ¿Qué buscan las personas que hacen deportes de riesgo?
- En tu opinión, ¿Merece la pena pagar precios tan altos por la comida bio?
- ¿Piensas que es justo que la seguridad social pague los tratamientos de

enfermedades causadas por nuestro estilo de vida, como el tabaquismo?
El teléfono móvil, ¿ha realmente facilitado la comunicación?
¿Por qué piensas que algunos estudiantes están desmotivados hoy?

Section B: Open-ended questions and depth of topic area

As with previous series, some teacher/examiners were adversely affecting their students' performance at times by asking closed questions, which the student repeats. For example, "*¿tu fumas?*" or "*¿te gusta beber?*"

It is more advantageous to the student to ask open-ended questions which allow the student to develop and include information they have researched. There should also be a balance between the amount the student speaks and the teacher/examiner input. The student must not be allowed to recite large amounts of pre-learnt monologues and the teacher/examiner must not interrupt the student or dominate the exchange either, but rather facilitate a natural discussion.

This test is an introduction to the expression of opinion and justification and is a reasonable grounding for A2, if carried out in accordance with the spirit of the test.

Therefore, teacher/examiners should conduct the test in a way that is much more than a glorified GCSE test. Such an approach can only lead to a student being marked as only having "limited understanding".

It is better to handle the topics 'in depth', (ie; discuss one or two topics) than 'in breadth', (lots of different topics).

The inclusion of too many sub topics will inevitably lead to a question and answer session. As a consequence, this will not allow the student to show the depth of knowledge required for a high mark in 'Understanding' of General Topic Area, or sufficient development of points, ideas and opinions required for a high mark for 'Response'.

Section B: Spontaneous Language

It was pleasing to note that in most cases students' responses were spontaneous and not pre-rehearsed or recited. Spontaneity is very important and students are positively rewarded for this in the mark for 'Response'. However in a few cases the tests/conversations did not sound natural and it was evident that students had learnt the tests by heart.

Experienced examiners are able to identify pre-learnt tests through the "written" language, flat intonation and the recapping of complete sentences. In these circumstances, marks will be restricted.

In a few cases, the teacher/examiner prompted the students when they hesitated using the same words that the student then repeated, or the student whispered "*I can't remember*" in English. This is clearly not in the spirit of the examination and will affect the marks awarded for 'Response'. In all cases, examiners have made comments on the oral assessment forms (OR1) for the students concerned.

In a minority of assessments it is evident that the teacher/examiners are not aware that Section B must relate to the student's chosen topic area, and questions relating to other topic areas will score no marks towards 'Understanding' of General Topic Area.

Centre performance, including administration

In general the administration of the tests was carried out exceptionally well this series.

Most scripts arrived shortly after the end of the oral window, and were sent to the correct examiner. Most items were well packaged, although not all. Not all student

names and numbers were recorded at the start of the oral test, and in a minority of cases the student number was recorded incorrectly.

Most centres sent the correct paperwork but a very small number of packs were missing the oral forms (OR1) and registers. **Centres are reminded that there is a new version of the OR1 form which can be downloaded from the Edexcel website.**

Examiners have requested that Centres place in order the OR1 forms, in accordance with the recordings, to ease marking.

Examiners noted on the whole a high quality of sound recordings for the orals this series. Most centres recorded their orals onto CDs, some still using audio cassettes and an even greater proportion are now sending USB sticks. Examiners reported a minority of cases where CDs and USB contained both the AS and A2 scripts which is not permissible.

Centres are reminded of the Edexcel Notice to Centres on the website to inform them that audio cassettes will no longer be accepted for assessment after September 2014.

Timing and recording of assessments

Teacher/examiners are reminded to read carefully the oral handbook before conducting the orals tests. This is available for download from the qualification page of the Edexcel website.

The timing of oral tests was generally very much better than previously, with only a minority of tests being identified as shorter than the required minimum 8 minutes. As a consequence, students will have had marks withheld.

This series examiners noted several long tests, which do not benefit students as examiners are required to stop listening after the maximum 10 minutes.

Teacher/examiners are reminded to record the name and number of the student as well as the General Topic Area and stimulus card at the start of each test.

For digital recordings, Centres are requested to number the students either using the OR1 forms, or on the CDs.

Examiners have asked that centres be reminded to label the CD with centre number and students and also to attach a tag to the USB sticks wherever possible.

Completion of oral forms (OR1)

The sequencing of the stimulus cards should be noted on the OR1 forms, including the date of the test. ***This is a requirement of the new OR1 forms and Centres are reminded to use the correct version of this form***, which is available for download from the qualification page on the Edexcel website.

Examiners noted that, on the whole, most OR1 forms arrived with recordings and were generally completed correctly. Centres must NOT enter their own marks on the OR1 forms as these spaces must be left blank for the official Edexcel examiners.

Centres are asked to read the comments and feedback written by examiners onto their OR1 forms when they are returned in the autumn as it is hoped that they will provide constructive feedback on the conduct of the tests.

Quality of language

There were some excellent performances by students, and not all from near native speakers. A good proportion of students used a wide range of appropriate vocabulary and structures enabling them to speak fluently and accurately.

Range

There were a number of examples of interesting idiomatic expressions, impressive vocabulary and linguistic structures, such as:

"esto es chocante", "escudriñar", "alveolos", "cardiocirculatorios", "completamente carente de", "enfermedad coronaria", "me agobia", "coetáneo", "toque de queda", "yéndosele de las manos", "vinculado", "brindar una red de apoyo imprescindible", "un cuerpo de morirse", "barrenderos", "flojos", "liderazgo", "rango".

The majority of students endeavour to use the present and imperfect subjunctive and memorise expressions, such as "*es importante que..*" and "*si fuera el primer ministro...*". In these cases, students often fail to use it well further into the discussion.

The most able students were able to use direct and indirect object pronouns competently, as well as preterit/imperfect, perfect and present subjunctive.

There were some examples of imperfect and perfect subjunctive as well, "*espero que no se me haya olvidado*"..; and examples of irregular verbs in tenses other than present: "*establezca*", "*dicho*", "*tuviéramos*".

Accuracy

Whilst there appears to be some improvement in some areas amongst weaker students, there were examples of students with basic communication skills displaying a high incidence of basic error. Errors of pronunciation and stress were widespread with anglicised consonants (g,j,r) and vowels as in "*variedad*", "*sociedad*", "*especialmente*".

There were some recurrent mistakes such as the confusion between '*ser*' and '*estar*' such as, "*está un problema*", "*está popular*".

In addition, there was evidence of incorrect use of '*gustar*' and incorrect article-noun or noun-adjective agreement with irregular masculine nouns such as, "*tema*", "*problema*" or "*día*", and irregular feminine nouns such as, "*presión*".

Weaker students also made agreement mistakes with regular nouns, for example, "*los escuelas*".

Furthermore, confusion exists between:

- bien/bueno
- mal/malo
- peligro/peligroso
- por/para

Also noted were incorrect subject-verb agreement, mispronunciation of the word "*sociedad*" ('i' pronounced like 'ai'), "*estadísticas*" instead of "*estadísticas*", "*mayoridad*" instead of "*mayoría*", and using the word "*libre*" meaning 'free of charge'.

In the present tense the first person or the infinitive was used instead of the third person: "*los jóvenes beber..*" "*los jóvenes tener muchas presiones*", "*los famosos dar una imagen mala*".

There was lexical confusion between the following:

- peligro/peligroso
- poco/pequeño
- importante/importancia
- interesante/interesado
- sensible/sensata
- individuo/individual

and many adaptations of English words:

- accesar,
- avoider
- interactar
- reporter
- influyar
- soprotar (for apoyar)

Profile of an A grade student (extracted from June 2012)

There are different profiles for students achieving an A grade in the AS unit. A typical A grade student should demonstrate a combination of most of the following (with reference to the relevant grade descriptors):

Understanding – Stimulus specific: A clear understanding of the stimulus achieving 3-4 marks, manipulating the language in response to questions 1 and 2

Example: **Youth, Culture and Concerns**

Stimulus : **1A - Los jóvenes, más solos que nunca**

T/E: Q1- “Según el primer párrafo, ¿qué gran cambio se ha notado?”

“Según el primer párrafo el cambio hoy en día es que los jóvenes sufren de la soledad más que los jubilados, según una encuesta.”

T/E: Q2 – “Según el artículo, ¿qué impacto tiene la tecnología en la vida?”

“Según el segundo párrafo la tecnología puede causar el aislamiento de los jóvenes y el aislamiento puede afectar la salud de los jóvenes y es cuando los jóvenes pasan muchas horas en línea.”

Full and detailed answers are expected in questions 3 and 4 to gain the higher marks of 3 or 4.

T/E: Q3 – “¿Qué beneficios tiene la tecnología en la vida de los jóvenes?”

“La tecnología es muy beneficioso para los adolescentes. No es una exageración decir que casi todos los jóvenes tienen un móvil con mensajería instantánea que permite comunicarse con sus amigos. Muchos jóvenes tienen... usan los sitios de redes sociales para contactar con sus amigos.”

T/E: Q4 – “¿Crees que es fácil hacer amigos hoy en día?, ¿Por qué (no)?

“Es fácil para encontrar nuevos amigos hoy en día y la tecnología no lo previene. Con las redes sociales es más fácil contactar con amigos y comunicar con personas.”

Understanding – General Topic Area (Section B)

Students would demonstrate a good understanding of the main points and subtle details of the teacher/examiner's questions and respond appropriately with good ideas and opinions to back up their responses.

They would not generally ask the teacher to repeat questions more than once. They would be able to discuss a range of sub-topics or offer opinions on a few sub-topics explored in depth.

Language (Accuracy)

Generally accurate pronunciation and intonation – not interfering with comprehension at any point, no basic grammar errors of agreement in adjectives or verbs. Only minor errors of gender. At least one successful attempt at incorporating complex language even though not all correct.

Language (Range)

Vocabulary and structures would show evidence of research into the General Topic Area, i.e. a variety of words to describe 'los jóvenes' or problems associated with unhealthy living for General Topic Area, Lifestyle, Health and Fitness, e.g. *la obesidad, la anorexia*. There would be a range of structures (not just tenses) and expressions to express opinions.

Response

This is the most important section for students with 40% of the marks for this unit. Students would require little to no prompting from the teacher/examiner and would respond readily and fluently to almost all of the questions, including section A. They would take the initiative at times and justify some of the points of view they present, if not all. They would develop most of their points. They would have no difficulty with any of the questions, deal 'adequately' with all questions and not hesitate to offer their response other than to think of their answer.

Example (part of section B only)

This extract also illustrates some excellent questioning which enables a natural conversation to develop and explores the student's depth of knowledge and understanding of the sub topic.

T/E: "Vamos a hablar un poco de los móviles, ¿Son muy importantes para ti y para tus amigos?"

"Sí, tanto para enviar mensajes como llamar cuando necesitamos hablar con mi madre y mi padre. Según una encuesta 67% de los menores tienen móviles, así que comunicar es la cosa más importante. Es imprescindible para la seguridad de un niño cuando salen de copas o cuando salen en pandilla por la noche."

T/E: "¿A qué edad, crees tú, que un niño debería tener un móvil?"

"Depende de la madurez de un joven. Personalmente cuando era menor tenía un móvil de la edad de 9 años. Soy consciente de que es un poco menor pero era guay para mí y no lo utilizaba mucho pero sí."

T/E: "Entiendo que si un niño es maduro no hay un problema con eso ¿tiene algún riesgo el uso excesivo del móvil, crees tú?"

"Sí, en el artículo que ha leído del 67% que tiene...tienen un móvil el 30% muestran cierto grado de adicción, así que hay definitivamente los jóvenes que nunca se apagan sus móviles, ni siquiera de la noche así que a mi juicio es un problema muy grande no sólo por adicción sino por...para los riesgos de salud."

T/E: "¿En qué sentido los riesgos de salud?"

"Hay riesgos, las autoridades no saben todo pero hay un peligro que puede ser problemas del cerebro."

T/E: "Por el uso excesivo del móvil, ¿no? Otro problema es el mandar mensajes, ¿en qué forma escriben los jóvenes cuando mandan mensajes?"

"En una forma más corta así que en un mundo que siempre está evolucionando hay un peligro que el lenguaje va a evolucionar también, es normal pero ha habido un cambio drástico en los últimos 10 años."

T/E: ¿Tú ves por ejemplo el móvil como accesorio de moda?, ¿es importante tener un teléfono moderno?"

"Hay una preocupación de tener el último modelo como el iphone pero también hay una influencia del presión del grupo un poco para los jóvenes, los tienen para sentirse parte del grupo en vez de ser solo."

Profile of an E grade student (extracted from June 2012)

There are different profiles for students achieving an E grade in this AS unit. A typical E grade student should demonstrate a combination of the following (with reference to the relevant grade descriptors):

Understanding – Stimulus specific

The student would demonstrate some basic understanding of the stimulus and would be able to convey some basic information but may be over reliant on the text and not target lifts sufficiently or not clearly enough in order to demonstrate good understanding. They would demonstrate only a limited ability to explain the content of the text. The student may ask for some of the questions to be repeated.

Example: **Lifestyle, Health and Fitness**

Stimulus 1A - **la Copa Mundial y la publicidad**

VE: Q1 “¿Por qué se menciona la FIFA en el primer párrafo ?”

“Según el artículo la federación internacional del fútbol asociado fue criticada porque tiene acuerdos financieros con compañías malsanas.”

VE: Q2 “Según el artículo, ¿por qué se criticó este tipo de publicidad?”

“Este tipo de publicidad es criticó porque los niños ver este publicidad de comida malsana y es importante para los niños de comer buena y hacer ejercicio y estes compañías no animar esto.”

Satisfactory answers are expected in questions 3 and 4. However the student may not be able to answer one or other of these questions appropriately and may include irrelevant and pre-learnt details.

VE: Q3 “En tu opinión, ¿quién es responsable de la obesidad de los jóvenes? ¿Por qué?”

“Hay muchas cosas de obesidad. la mayor causa es la falta de ejercicio. Los padres decidir que los niños comer. pero en La sociedad la comida basura es muy (hesitation) más fácil que la comida sana”.

VE: Q4 “En tu opinión, ¿cómo podemos promover una vida más activa entre los jóvenes?” (question repeated)

“En mi opinión es importante para el gobierno de promover una vida sana por los jóvenes. El gobierno recomendar que los jóvenes hacer 30 minutos de ejercicio cinco veces a la semana. Y en la escuela es obligatorio para los niños de hacer dos horas de deporte. También es importante para los jóvenes de comer una dieta balanceada que contienen las verduras, carne y productos lácteos pero en moderación. Los padres y el gobierno debe... (cannot finish so examiner moves the conversation on.....)”

Understanding – General Topic Area (Section B)

Students would demonstrate some understanding of the main points only of the teacher/examiner’s questions and would be able to convey few/some relevant ideas and opinions.

Language (Accuracy)

There would be frequent errors in basic tenses and agreements. The language would not be comprehensible at times. Intonation and pronunciation would also be erratic and sometimes affect comprehension, often being influenced by the student’s own language.

Language (Range)

Students would operate almost entirely in simple sentences. They would demonstrate vocabulary relevant to the chosen topic area but it would be limited. Students would be expected to achieve a minimum of 3-4 marks.

Response

This is the most important section for students with 40% of the marks for this unit. Students would often be hesitant in their response and would rely heavily on the ideas and language of the teacher/examiner. They would need a lot of prompting and although they would be able to convey some basic information they would struggle to develop their responses.

Example

TE: Vamos a ver, ¿Piensas que los padres son los primeros responsables en la comida de sus hijos? ¿Sí?

"Sí, la mayoría del tiempo los niños son con tus padres y es los padres preferencia que los niños comen pero en las escuelas el gobierno influye la comida."

TE : Si claro. Y ¿Piensas que los niños deben recibir información sobre lo que es una comida buena?

"Los niños si van un poco de información, una dieta balanceada, pero cuando sea mayor me gustaría ver más campanas de comida sana."

TE: ¿En el colegio? ¿O dónde?

"Sí en el colegio y todos los países."

TE: Tú, ¿tienes una buena dieta?

"Para mí creo que como una dieta bastante buena pero a veces cuando estoy con mis amigos como la comida basura pero si yo tuviera más dinero comería la comida sana todo el tiempo pero es más caro que la comida basura."

TE: Entonces, ¿piensas que el colegio debería ofrecerte comida buena y gratis?"

"En colegio ofrece la comida sano pero es más caro que la comida basura."

TE: ¿Qué diferencia de precio hay entre unas patatas fritas y una ensalada? Tú, ¿me puedes decir cuánto cuesta?

"Uh, el dinero (pause)...es importante para decidir."

TE: El deporte dices que es importante. Tú personalmente, ¿haces algún deporte?

"Sí (pause) en el pasado había mucho deporte pero ahora no hago deporte todo el tiempo. Disfruto jugando baloncesto pero él en futro espero hacer los deportes peligros por ejemplo el puenting pero es costar mucho dinero."

TE: Y, ¿por qué estás más interesada en los deportes extremos?

"Porque es más interesante de los otros tipos de deporte. En el colegio es posible jugar el futbol, el baloncesto pero el puenting es mas diferencia."

TE: ¿Que beneficio tiene el deporte en la salud, en el cuerpo?

"El deporte es importante para mantenaer una buena forma y (pause) pero no solo.." (trails off)

TE: ¿Crees que combate la obesidad?

"Sí creo que el ejercicio es importante para prevenir la obesidad pero también es necesario tener una buena dieta."

TE: ¿Qué te parece una buena dieta? (repeated)

"No sé...una buena dieta..."

TE: ¿Verduras, por ejemplo?

“Oh, sí contiene una variedad pero todo en moderacion.”

They may have difficulty with one or two questions and fail to respond appropriately to them. There would be little spontaneity and a limited ability to respond to unpredictable questions. Any fluency would usually come from pre-learnt material.

Unit 1: Spoken Expression and Response

Marking guidance for oral examiners

Tests that are too short

A test is too short if it is less than 7 minutes 30 seconds. Candidates are allowed a 30 second tolerance.

Drop down one mark band to the corresponding mark across the following assessment grids:

- Quality of Language – Accuracy
- Quality of Language - Range of lexis
- Response

4-5	Accuracy variable but errors rarely impede communication; pronunciation and intonation inconsistent but comprehensible.
6-7	Generally accurate but some errors in more complex language; pronunciation and intonation generally good.
8	Highly accurate with perhaps some very minor errors; pronunciation and intonation authentic.

e.g. If a candidate would have scored 7, they should be given 5, if they would have scored 6, they should be given 4. This will not affect the other assessment criteria 'Understanding – Stimulus specific' or 'Understanding – General Topic Area'.

Test that are too long

Once the 10 minute mark has passed, the examiner stops listening at the end of the next sentence.

Tests that do not move away from initial stimulus sub topic

Candidates are limited in the amount of marks they can score.

- 'Quality of Language - Range of lexis' – limited to a maximum of 3 marks
- 'Response' – limited to a maximum of 8 marks
- 'Understanding - General topic area' – cannot score more than 0

Tests that are pre-learnt

Candidates are limited in the amount of marks they can score.

- 'Response' - limited to a maximum of 8 marks

Please note:

Understanding – Stimulus specific should only be used to mark **Section A** of the oral test.

Understanding – General topic area should only be used to mark **Section B** of the oral test

When marking the oral exam, examiners are advised to immediately allocate a mark for Section A, prior allocating marks for the rest of the test (Section B).

If a score of '0' is awarded for any of the assessment grids, the oral recording should be referred to your Team Leader.

Grade Boundaries

Much work has taken place on the comparability of the oral units for French, German and Spanish. The senior examiners have worked closely together to ensure their application of the common oral marking criteria is consistently applied across these three languages. This has been in response to queries from centres about the results at unit level on the oral examinations.

Grade boundaries for this, and all other papers, can be found on the website on this link:
<http://www.edexcel.com/iwantto/Pages/grade-boundaries.aspx>

Ofqual



Llywodraeth Cynulliad Cymru
Welsh Assembly Government



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