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Examiners' Report

Principal Examiner Feedback

Summer 2017

Pearson Edexcel GCE
In Spanish (6SP01) Paper 1A

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The assessment for this unit 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 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 using the grid printed in the specification (1.4, p. 24 and p. 25). 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

In general, examiners reported that most examinations were carried out well and in accordance with 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 best 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 again generally very high in this penultimate series.

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. The teacher examiner's approach to questioning during the test is crucial.

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.

The majority of students made an attempt to change the 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 or the first sentence. Whilst direct lifts from the stimulus card in student's responses are acceptable 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.

Most teacher examiners read all four questions including the "¿Por qué (no)? as is required.

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 in the section below (transcribed with original errors).

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 in almost all previous series the two most popular topics continue to be Youth Culture and Concerns and Lifestyle, Health and Fitness. A small number of students chose the World Around Us and very few Education and Employment, mainly adult and international centres. The World Around Us also provides a greater opportunity for demonstrating new vocabulary and issues which can lead to more interesting and varied conversations for the student and teacher/examiner. Students who chose either The World Around Us or Education and Employment were reported to have generally carried out extra research and learnt specific vocabulary and facts although not in all cases. In centres with visiting examiners the most popular topic areas were Lifestyle, health and fitness followed by the World Around Us.

Overall students had clearly been well prepared for this part of the test and had recognised that Q1 and Q2 related to the content of the text. In all cases the better students were able to manipulate the language of the texts and further develop their responses with detailed examples and explanations.

Examiners' specific comments related to each of the stimuli:

Centres may like to note that examiners try hard to ensure there is an even number of possible points (usually 6) within the texts for answers 1 and 2.

From the GTA Youth Culture and Concerns:-,

Stimulus cards 1A and 1B "la familia tradicional y la familia actual"

This was a popular stimulus card due to the sequencing and students performed well extracting many of the accessible points in their responses. Some students listened carefully to the teacher examiner and manipulated the start of their responses to Q1 and Q2 with phrases like "*según el primer párrafo*" and "*el texto dice/menciona que*" or "*se ha mencionado que*".

Q1 and Q2

These were generally well done and most students had something to say. There were quite a few attempts at language manipulation;

- Los dos padres; padre y madre (for biparental)
- El objetivo más importante
- La misión fundamental
- 'Normas' for 'reglas'
- 'El padre establecía' for 'el padre imponía' las reglas
- El padre era él que mandaba
- 'No era aceptado' for 'no se solía aceptar'
- No estaba bien visto
- No se admitía
- 'Manera' for 'forma'
- 'Puntos de vista' for 'opinión'

Q3 and Q4

Typical answers to reasons why some couples had no children, were down to financial reasons, the economic recession and unemployment or wanting to be free to enjoy life as a couple, but some thought this was selfish. Some of the girls mentioned women's interest in having a career.

As for reasons for more cases of divorce nowadays, they went back to the text idea of 'it being more acceptable' and others referred to changes after Franco.

Q4

On the question of discipline, some offered some interesting ideas such as 'una disciplina psicológica'. Others referred to 'ahora los jóvenes no obedecen sólo por obedecer'. They also talked about discussing why following norms was necessary, and making sure that they understood the principle of discipline. The way in which the role of women has changed was not properly understood. Some even said that it was better for the children if the woman stayed at home.

Youth Culture and Concerns: 2A/2B: "La generación conectada"

There were some interesting attempts at manipulating the language for this stimulus. Here are some examples;

- 'La generación actual' for 'de hoy'
- Está pegada al móvil
- 'Quiere estar al día' for 'miedo a perderse algo'
- 'conducta' for 'comportamiento'
- 'una tragedia' for 'desastre'
- 'adictivo' for 'compulsivo'

- 'constantemente'/'interrumpidamente' for 'permanentemente'
- 'mensaje' for 'notificación'

A fair number of students did not provide all the required information in response to Q1 and Q2 and some responses to Q3 and Q4 were brief and referred back to the original ideas mentioned earlier.

Q3

The effect on relationships was occasionally ignored and a few talked about the advantages or disadvantages of using a mobile.

Q4

Some responses were brief and again went back to mobile phones because they had not understood: 'aparte de la adicción'.

From the GTA - Lifestyle, Health and Fitness:-

Cards 1A/1B – "la obesidad en España"

Responses to this stimulus showed some good language manipulation;

- 'Las tasas' for 'los niveles'
- 'se han incrementado'/'han subido' for 'han aumentado'
- 'la mitad'/'50%' for 'uno de cada dos adultos'
- '25%'/'una cuarta parte' for 'un cuarto'
- 'problemas de corazón' for 'cardiovasculares'
- 'es debido a'/'se debe' for 'culpa'
- 'ha llevado a'/'ha conducido' for 'hace que'
- 'mala situación económica' for 'la crisis'

Q1

Answers were generally good and most covered sufficient points however, some missed the connection between the lack of money and unhealthy/sugary foods. The students mostly referred to salt and fat rather than sugar. Some even mentioned 'la dieta mediterránea'.

1A/Q3

Most students referred to fast food and not exercise or an active lifestyle. Many students did mention that schools and government had to do something but not what needed to be done as the question required.

1A/Q4

Because some students missed the key words 'otros factores' que afectan la salud, they talked about the problems obesity causes.

1B/Q3

This question produced some good answers pointing to parents, schools and the importance of the government controlling the power of food companies, shops and marketing techniques.

1B/Q4

Although most students provided some interesting responses, some offered no explanation as to whether it was possible to eat healthily with less money or if there are alternatives, instead choosing to talk about food and not exercise.

Lifestyle, health and fitness card 2A/B: El aceite de oliva es beneficioso para la salud

This stimulus card was used a lot due to the random sequencing of the cards and was well attempted by most students.

Some examples of language manipulations were;

- 'contiene nutrientes' for 'nutritivo'
- 'disminuye' for 'reduce'
- 'reducir' for 'bajar'
- 'cardiopatías' for enfermedades cardiacas'
- 'del corazón' for 'cardiacas'

Q1 and Q2

These produced fairly straightforward answers but it was common for students to miss the idea of olive oil as the basis for the Mediterranean diet.

Q3 and Q4

Many students produced typical responses mentioning obesity and fast food etc, but some did not fully address the 'por qué?' element of the question. Many clearly only related 'vida sana' to food consumption. Once again, some students talked about the need to do something to tackle unhealthy living but not 'what' can be done.

From the GTA – World Around Us

Stimulus card 1A and 1B: "los conductores jóvenes"

There were unfortunately almost no reported uses of this stimulus card this series.

Stimulus card 2A and 2B "los incendios forestales en España"

There were very few students for 2A or 2B. One examiner reported some students from a Spanish centre who were very articulate and well informed and who had conversations on this card which were informative and mature. In some cases they even appeared to know more than the examiner.

The weakest answer was in response to 2A Q4 because students referred in their answers to what the government should do rather than us as individuals as the question required. The few students who responded to 2B Q4 were clear and concise, and this continued throughout the rest of the discussion which was a pleasure to listen to.

From the GTA – Education and Employment 1A and 1B: La globalización ¿afecta el empleo?

Examiners reported only a handful of students who had been given this card.

Some good examples of vocabulary was noted:

- 'del mundo' for 'mundial'
- 'productos'/ 'mercancías' for 'bienes'
- 'desarrollo de la tecnología' for 'avance tecnológicos'
- 'trabajos' for 'empleos'
- 'compañías' for 'empresas'
- 'aumenta' for 'incrementa'
- 'detractores' for 'críticos'
- 'menos cara' for 'más barata'

Most students answered the stimulus questions well but a few missed the idea of the effect on developed countries (Q2)

1B Q4 proved challenging for the students, however, they did mention that knowledge of a language would be helpful.

Stimulus card 2A and 2B – La educación en casa

Examiners heard more examples of this stimulus and they reported the discussions to be interesting and it offered good opportunities for the students interested in this topic area.

Some good examples of manipulation included:

- 'ataques'/ 'intimidación' for 'acoso'
- 'enseñanza' for 'instrucción académica'
- 'distinta'/ 'de otra manera' for 'diferente'
- 'no están felices' for 'insatisfacción'

One of the students who spoke on this stimulus had been taught at home during their primary school years and another one had indirect experience because her parents taught young children at home in more isolated rural areas. They gave a new perspective to this issue.

Section B

Most teacher examiners asked interesting and relevant questions based on students' chosen GTA and listened to given responses in order to develop a

natural discussion. So too did teachers examiners give their students ample opportunity to show their knowledge. They were sympathetic to the differing needs and abilities of all.

It is disappointing to see once again that very few students chose Education and Employment the sub-topics are very relevant to students and the issues they face today.

There were some excellent, spontaneous exchanges in which students showed their ability to discuss their topics fluently and enthusiastically. The range of vocabulary used was at times impressive. However, the same shortcomings as in previous years were noted by examiners. The most serious was the failure of some teacher examiners to enable their students to access the higher mark bands by failing to provide opportunities for their students to react spontaneously and develop ideas. Some teacher examiners allowed the students to deliver long, memorised and mainly factual material with little or no attempt to explore their ideas by asking probing questions. It has to be stated once again that some teachers introduced too many sub-topics, too many closed questions and were also relying on a familiar set of questions without any attempt at developing a meaningful exchange. This is clearly not in the spirit of the examination.

Here is an example of an excellent answer to part 2 of the exam (Youth Culture and Concerns) noted by one of our examiners.

Question: ¿Es mejor que los jóvenes estén siempre en contacto a través de los móviles?

Answer: El aspecto social es muy importante, o sea es uno de los aspectos más cruciales para los adolescentes. Tener esa plataforma donde puedes hablar con tus amigos siempre y siempre puedes preguntarles cuando tienes una duda o un problema es muy bueno. Por el otro lado, hablando otra vez de los exámenes, siempre estás conectado al teléfono. No puedes escapar incluso si apagas el teléfono sabes que están allí en un grupo de mensajes por ejemplo hablando y tú vas a querer ser parte de eso también.

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 students' names and numbers were recorded at the start of the oral 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 OR forms and registers.

Examiners noted overall a high quality of sound recordings for the orals this series. All centres recorded their orals onto CDs or USB sticks, although some USBs were encrypted and examiners had to call centres to access the material.

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. The majority had prepared expressions where the present or the imperfect subjunctive was needed. Indeed a common question was again – “si fueras el primer ministro, ¿qué harías?” Since this is a difficult question, both conceptually and linguistically, there were different degrees of success.

There were frequent errors in the use of *ser/estar* and the verb *gustar*. Other common mistakes included;

- Radical changing verbs
- Gender and agreement of adjectives
- Irregular conditionals e.g. *hacería, podería, tenería*
- Irregular preterites and past participles e.g. *mordido, hacido, porque de, me prefiero, más bueno, se gusta, los turísticos*

There was confusion between: *ser/estar, morir/matar, crear/creer, soportar/apoyar, realizar/darse cuenta, salvar/ahorrar, saber/conocer, peligro/peligrosos, ridículo/ridiculoso, extraño/extranjero, más/muy, and mejor/mayor, sana/salud, content/contenido, peligro/peligroso, parientes/padres*

Some ended a sentence with a preposition e.g. “no tiene nadie hablar con.” Some anglicised inventions: *expectar, copar, capable, el facto, realístico, providar, atractar, afordar, improvar, avoider, proveder, soportar for apoyar, riscos for riesgos, expectaciones for expectativas*

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: Los jóvenes, más sólos que nunca"

YC S1A – TE: 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."

TE: 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.

TE: 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 "

TE: 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 mas fácil contactar con amigos y comunicar con personas"

This student was awarded 4/4 marks for Understanding of stimulus

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. Students would normally achieve a minimum of 7 marks.

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. (achieving minimum 6 marks)

Language – range:

Vocabulary and structures would show evidence of research into the GTA i.e.: a variety of words to describe “los jóvenes” or problems associated with unhealthy living for GTA “lifestyle” e.g. *La obesidad, la anorexia*, . There would be a range of structures (not just tenses) and expressions to express opinions. Students would be expected to achieve 6 marks minimum.

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. They would achieve a minimum of 15 marks.

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.

TE:: “Vamos a hablar un poco de los móviles , ¿Son muy importantes para ti y para tus amigos?

Student: “Si, 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”””

TE: “¿A qué edad , crees tú, que un niño debería tener un móvil?

Student:” 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”.

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

Student: "Si, 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".

TE: "¿En qué sentido los riesgos de salud?"

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

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

Student: "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."

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

Student: 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".

(This student was awarded 16 marks for response, 9 for GTA Und)

Profile of an E grade student (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. They would typically achieve 1-2 marks.

Example/ Lifestyle, Health and Fitness, Stimulus 1A la Copa Mundial y la publicidad

LHF S1A – VE: Q1- “*¿Por qué se menciona la FIFA en el primer párrafo ?*”

“Según el articulo la federación internacional del futbol 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 estos 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, may include irrelevant and pre-learnt details and is likely to gain marks of 1 or 2 for this criterion overall.

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 decider 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 VE moves the conversation on..... ”

This student scored 2 mark for stimulus specific understanding demonstrating a satisfactory understanding of the stimulus

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. Students would normally achieve 4-6 marks.

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. (Achieving a minimum of 3-4 marks)

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:-

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

Student: "Si, 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

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

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

Examiner: ¿En el colegio? ¿O dónde??

Student Si en el colegio y todos los países

Examiner: tú, ¿tienes una buena dieta?

Student: 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."

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

Student: En colegio ofrece la comida sano pero es mas caro que la comida basura.

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

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

Examiner: el deporte dices que es importante. tu personalmente haces algun deporte?

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

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

Student: 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

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

Student: El deporte es importante para mantener una buena forma y (pause) pero no solo.... trails off

Examiner: ¿Crees que combate la obesidad?

Student: Sí creo que el ejercicio es importante para prevenir la obesidad pero tambien es necesario tener una buena dieta

Examiner: ¿Que te parece una buena dieta? (repeated)

Student: No sé....una buena dieta....

Examiner: ¿Verduras por ejemplo?

Student: Oh, sí contiene una variedad pero todo en moderacion

This student achieved 9 for response and 5 for understanding of GTA

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. He/she would typically achieve 5-9 marks.

A typical profile for a student who just achieves an E grade would therefore likely to be:

3 (language – accuracy) + 4 (language – range) 8 (response) + 2 (understanding – stimulus specific) + 5 (understanding - GTA) = 22

