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Examiners' Report  
Principal Examiner Feedback  
Summer 2023

Pearson Edexcel GCE  
In Spanish (9SP0)  
Paper 3: Speaking

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## **Introduction**

Examiners listened to candidates with a broad range of abilities, covering most of the range of marks available. There were a some excellent and superbly prepared candidates with a good knowledge of Spanish grammar and willingness to take care with the preparation of their topics and issues, whilst others provided less evidence of in-depth research.

Overall, the quality of the speaking test was high, however there were a number of native speaker candidates who were ill-prepared and seemed to assume that mother tongue Spanish would suffice. All candidates should be made fully aware of the assessment criteria and the requirements of the examination, see below.

## **Task 1**

### **Knowledge and understanding of society and culture (AO4)**

All the cards worked as intended and encouraged demonstration of AO4, Knowledge and Understanding of Spain or the Hispanic world. Most candidates were able to answer a variety of questions on different aspects of the themes. Answers were at times excellently developed and many candidates could give details such as facts, figures and percentages. They could use varied vocabulary and complex structures.

The majority of teacher-examiners asked good follow on questions which encouraged candidates to demonstrate their knowledge of the Spanish-speaking world. On the whole this was done better than in previous years.

The most popular areas for discussion were Theme 1 and Theme 3. Many candidates demonstrated deep understanding and made interesting and unusual points.

Mostly, the teacher-examiners read out Q1 and Q2 as printed on the stimulus cards, but occasionally, the questions were rephrased. Some candidates asked the teacher a question in between Q1 and Q2. In most cases the teacher-examiner dealt with this correctly, by responding briefly and moving on to T1 Q2, but occasionally, they asked several additional questions in between Q1 and Q2. The information provided by the candidate in these responses could not be taken into consideration when determining the mark for AO4.

At times, the teacher-examiner asked leading questions which either supplied the answer or simply invited candidates to agree.

### **Accuracy and range of language (AO3)**

The more successful candidates were able to use complex structures and to offer a wide range of appropriate lexis in order to express their ideas, but many offered incorrect subject/verb accord, forgot adjectival agreements and offered incorrect genders for familiar vocabulary. There were candidates who confused future and conditional tenses. Some forgot to the subjunctive or did not attempt to use subordination or other complex structures.

Examiners observed the following common errors in language:

- Incorrect subject/verb accord.
- Confusion with ser, estar, haber, tener.
- Infinitives used instead of the present tense.
- Incorrect use of the subjunctive, or no subjunctives.
- Incorrect adjectival agreements and incorrect for familiar vocabulary at A Level, e.g. La tema, la problema, el gente, el ley, el situación, el opinión
- Vocabulary: igualdad for igualdad, desigualdad for desigualdad, niños for jóvenes, hijos for jóvenes, figuras for cifras, la mayoría for mayoría, mejor for mayor, controversial, financial, soporte for apoyar, instancias for casos/ejemplos, rol for papel, vistas for puntos de vista, crear for creer, 'los locales' instead of 'los lugareños/la gente local'.
- Difficulties with numbers, for example confusion between 'millones' and 'miles'.
- English words with Spanish endings; restringir, afrontar, evitar, permitir, acceder, prevenir, mejorar, involucrar, reportar, esperar, promover.
- Incorrect use of the verb "enfrentarse".
- Silent H pronounced as "j".

### **Interaction (AO1)**

Examiners observed many good performances on AO1, Interaction. The discussions were naturally developed, even with weaker candidates. The interaction and fluency was good and students showed they had learned to check for understanding in a natural way.

Candidates are reminded that they do not need to check for understanding in Task 1, Part 1, the set questions on the stimulus cards. If they do, the teacher-examiner should respond very briefly and continue.

### **Examiners' comments on the stimulus cards**

#### **Theme 1: La evolución de la sociedad española**

##### **Card SP1**

##### **A. Los padres españoles son demasiado permisivos con sus hijos.**

There were references to technology as having an impact on their relationship of young people with parents and changes in attitude and ideas to explain the freedom children are given. They also mentioned changes in the family and the most recent family laws. In terms of problems faced by youngsters, discussions addressed the difficulty in finding jobs and not being able to leave the family home.

##### **B. En España hay una brecha generacional cada vez más grande dentro de las familias.**

Some candidates answered Q2 in their response to Q1. Some were able to discuss the causes but not the impact of the 'brecha generacional'.

##### **Card SP2**

##### **A. Ya no se puede decir que los españoles sólo trabajan para vivir bien.**

Some answers were not focused on the 'actitud' about which the question asked. Rather, they described how much unemployment there is and inequalities between men and women, mentioning for example, 'la brecha salarial, el techo de cristal, los nini's, etc'. It is good practice to use statistics to support observations, but candidates should make sure they can explain figures clearly and convincingly.

### **B El mercado laboral español es cada vez más estable gracias a la economía nacional.**

Many said that the situation was improving after the pandemic and that tourists were returning to Spain. They also believed that immigrants were helping in the recovery. In Q2, some candidates who had already mentioned tourism in Q1 struggled to demonstrate knowledge of any other sector of the Spanish labour market.

#### **Card SP3**

### **A. El principal problema del turismo en España es la concentración de turistas en ciertos lugares.**

There were good answers, with examples which did not simply include the most obvious Barcelona, Magaluf in Mallorca and 'turismo de sol y playa'. Only a few candidates were able to expand on alternatives to promote other areas and activities. Some mentioned 'ecoturismo' and 'cicloturismo' in a very general way and were unable to give concrete examples, apart from 'El Camino de Santiago', suggesting a lack of research on this topic. In some cases, 'diversificación' was not understood.

### **B. La industria turística en España se ha desarrollado sin prestar atención al impacto medioambiental.**

Although less popular than Option A, the best responses gave specific examples of 'turismo cultural, rural, gastronómico' for example staying in 'casas rurales' or walking and exploring the flora and fauna of some of the Natural Parks, such as 'Picos de Europa', Los Pirineos, Sierra de Gredos, Cazorla, Doñana.

## **Theme 2 La cultura política y artística en el mundo hispanohablante**

#### **Card SP4**

### **A Los artistas populares hispanos prefieren cantar en inglés.**

Candidates explained why singers decided to sing in English, with examples of Shakira, Enrique Iglesias and reguetón. Some were unable to provide different examples for Q2.

### **B La letra de algunas canciones populares hispanas es polémica.**

Candidates gave examples of lyrics by rap singers Valtonyc, Pitbull, Bad Bunny and Maluma. Few could demonstrate much evidence of research about other types of more traditional music in Spain or Latin America.

#### **Card SP5**

### **A Las telenovelas hispanas son muy melodramáticas, pero poco duraderas.**

This card was chosen by only a few candidates. They analysed how the themes represented Latin American society and why they were so popular and the impact they had. Some examples were; *Yo soy Betty la fea*; *Amar es para siempre*; *Café con aroma de mujer*; *Mia es la venganza*, *La casa de las flores*, *La reina del Flow*, *Pasión de Gavilanes*.

### **B Internet ha tenido un impacto enorme en la vida política del mundo hispanohablante.**

A few candidates mentioned the impact of social media on recent political campaigns in Spain. In general, candidates did not demonstrate evidence of much research on this sub-theme. Some were unable even to give an example. This was also the case in discussions on Spanish newspapers or magazines.

#### **Card SP6**

### **A Los hispanos valorarán siempre todas sus fiestas tradicionales.**

Some candidates could give an example of a traditional fiesta and describe what happens but could not justify the reasons for its popularity.

Examiners heard a great many very similar examples. Candidates are reminded that there is scope to gain marks for AO4 by giving examples of fiestas and festivals which move away from those most commonly known, for example 'los Sanfermines' and 'la Tomatina'. There are thousands of festivities during the whole year in Spain alone, so plenty to research.

### **B La popularidad de las fiestas hispanas no religiosas crece año tras año.**

Candidates mentioned the effects of globalisation in changing the nature of traditional celebrations. Successful answers said that the majority of fiestas and festivals have religious and non-religious elements, regardless of the diminishing influence of the church and that they offer a mixture of history, tradition, art and religion.

## **Theme 3 La inmigración y la sociedad multicultural española**

#### **Card SP7**

### **A. Los inmigrantes aportan más flexibilidad al mercado laboral en España.**

Candidates appeared, in general, to have studied Theme 3 in more detail. They were able to offer statistics about the percentage of immigrants as a proportion of the total population, their contribution to the PIB, the types of jobs they have and the number (albeit not always accurate) of immigrants from Morocco, Romania, Latin America and from the EU.

### **B. La cultura española actual es una mezcla de las culturas indígenas y las de los inmigrantes.**

When discussing the cultural influence, candidates rarely talked about more recent influences and issues relating to immigration today. They often gave examples about the Muslim invasion many centuries ago. Once again, candidates could pick up marks for perceptive ideas on AO4, by doing research on modern day film directors, poets, writers, photographers, musicians,

politicians, or any other influential personalities residing in Spain who immigrated from other countries.

### **Card SP8**

#### **A. La marginación de los inmigrantes sólo existe en algunas partes del país.**

Examiners commented that candidates would benefit from doing more research and giving specific examples about a variety of groups of immigrants and their situation in specific parts of Spain where they encounter different problems.

#### **B. La integración de los inmigrantes sigue siendo un desafío enorme para España.**

Few demonstrated knowledge of current immigration laws in Spain or the rights of foreigners living in the country. Candidates should be familiar with the work of organisations supporting immigrants from different countries.

### **Card SP9**

#### **A La reacción social a la inmigración en España es positiva.**

Some candidates were unable to distinguish between 'La reacción social a la inmigración' and 'La reacción pública'. Few referred to political parties or other NGOs.

#### **B La popularidad de partidos de ultraderecha refleja actitudes cada vez menos favorables hacia la inmigración en España.**

Candidates were generally aware of the rise in popularity of Vox and of the political positions of other parties, but few were able to support their opinions with factual information.

## **Theme 4 La dictadura franquista y la transición a la democracia**

### **Card SP10**

There were some excellent performances on cards from Theme 4. The candidates who opted for this theme had been very well prepared. Often they were able to speak convincingly and with strong feeling.

#### **A. La Guerra Civil se caracterizó como una lucha de clases.**

Candidates knew about class divisions in Spain leading up to the Civil War. They were able to give examples of different social groups who supported each band. Some also mentioned external support and political agendas of other countries.

#### **B. La derrota republicana se consiguió gracias a la superioridad militar del bando nacional.**

Candidates were generally able to demonstrate knowledge about the relative superiority of the nationalists, citing support from Italy and Germany and the support within Spanish society from the Church and the landed classes.

Tensions and divisions within the Republican band were often given as reasons why they lost the Civil War

### **Card SP11**

#### **A. La dictadura franquista puso fin a la modernización del país.**

Only a few candidates chose this card. Those who did showed understanding of the changes in Spanish society leading up to the Civil War and how these advances were lost during the dictatorship.

#### **B El pueblo español vivía bajo un miedo constante durante la dictadura.**

Candidates were aware of the terrible conditions suffered by the losing side during the dictatorship and the use of fear as means to control society. They mentioned the impact of censorship, imprisonment, torture, indoctrination, child-theft and other means of oppression.

### **Card SP12**

This card was not frequently chosen, but examiners heard some excellent performances on the sub-theme this year.

#### **A La transición fue un proceso complejo y de gran incertidumbre.**

Below is an example of one candidate's excellent response to Q12A:

*Q. En tu opinión ¿por qué fue tan complejo el proceso a la democracia?*

*A. Creo que fue tan complejo por el hecho de que había una sociedad tan fracturada por el franquismo en el pasado, y al inicio de considerar la democracia el gobierno propuso que continuara el franquismo pero algunos ministros tenían la idea de la reforma, y con eso sabías que había tres caminos que pudieron seguir. El camino de la ruptura democrática, lo que significaba criminalizar las acciones de los franquista, la idea de la reforma y la idea de continuar con el franquismo, y eligieron la evolución mas pacífica y creo que fue muy muy muy complejo porque la sociedad fue tan polarizada con creencias muy diferentes a lo que una sociedad debe ser de verdad. ¿Estás de acuerdo con lo que digo? Y..creo que eso es por que fue tan complejo que no pudieron encontrar una solución que daba a todo el mundo.*

This answer paints a detailed yet succinct picture of the situation that Spain faced at the beginning of the transition. The candidate demonstrated a clear understanding the issues at stake and the level of language to express the ideas articulately.

#### **B El Rey Juan Carlos tuvo razón en transferir muchos derechos a las diferentes comunidades de España.**

Below is an example of an excellent response during the follow-on discussion on the role of King Juan Carlos

*Q. ¿Cómo consiguió (el rey) defender la democracia durante el golpe de estado?*

*A. Lo hizo con un discurso, un discurso muy importante en la historia de España porque el discurso dijo que el rey estaba a favor de la democracia y en este discurso dijo que hay que defender la constitución que creaban, y además con este discurso toda la gente sabía que la democracia estaba allí para quedarse de verdad, y espero que compartas la misma opinión que yo, pero creo que el discurso fue la cosa que de verdad fue la chispa que de verdad encendió la democracia para España. ¿Te parece lo mismo?*

The candidate places the event in context and expresses his opinion about its ultimate significance with considerable eloquence.

### **Advice from examiners on Task 1**

- Candidates should tailor their answers precisely to the bullet points on the candidate card. They should not simply say everything they know on the sub-topic.
- During the 5 minutes preparation time, candidates should consider the bullet points carefully and make notes on different ideas in response to each prompt.
- SP3 candidates should research specific examples of alternatives to 'sol y playa' tourism.
- SP6 on the topic of festivals and fiestas, candidates should research some examples other than the most commonly known celebrations in order to meet the descriptor "perceptive examples" in the top bands for AO4, Knowledge and Understanding.
- Include up-to-date information on the current immigration situation in Spain in order to meet the description of "relevant" and "pertinent" in AO4.
- Avoid the common language errors noted above.
- Candidates do not need to ask questions and check for understanding during Task 1, Part 1 (the stimulus card). They should ask natural-sounding questions as part of the follow-on discussion.
- For the conduct of Task 1, please refer to the specification pages 19-21.

### **Task 2**

#### **Task 2, Part 1: Presentation**

The AO2 grid is used to mark the presentation. It assesses the ability to "**respond to written language in speech**". The presentation must contain a clear and detailed summary of the content of the written sources the candidate has used during their research. It must include the author's main ideas and the candidate's personal response to the sources, expressing feelings, thoughts and points of view about these sources.

This part of the test was done better than in previous years, with far fewer centres misunderstanding the purpose of the presentation. Most students referred to the two written sources.

A few candidates gave a long (30 seconds or more) introduction to the topic and why they had chosen it. This should be avoided as just wastes time and isn't relevant. Many candidates gave details of the names, dates, authors etc of the sources. This is fine, but does take up a lot of the 2 minutes. It is sufficient to say, for example 'en mi primera/segunda fuente...'. It is essential to ensure the sources are named on the RP3 form.

Some teachers interrupted the candidates. Teachers must allow the candidates to speak uninterrupted. They must interrupt after two minutes have passed, as parts of the presentation which go beyond two minutes are not assessed.

### **The personal response to the written sources**

Many students still gave a personal response was to the topic, rather than the written response.

The Specification suggests some ways of introducing a personal response, which can help clearly signpost this aspect of the presentation. Further examples noted by examiners were:

- *Encontré la primera fuente más creíble que la segunda fuente ya que ....*
- *El artículo me sorprendió porque..*
- *Esta fuente me pareció fascinante ya que...*

### **Guidance on Task 2**

It is essential that teachers refer to the following guidance on the conduct of Task 2:

A Level Spanish Specification p21-31, Guidance on **Task 2** (including the AO2 mark grid)

[https://qualifications.pearson.com/content/dam/pdf/A%20Level/Spanish/2016/S pecification%20and%20sample%20assessments/Specification\\_GCE\\_A\\_level\\_L3\\_in\\_Spanish.pdf](https://qualifications.pearson.com/content/dam/pdf/A%20Level/Spanish/2016/S pecification%20and%20sample%20assessments/Specification_GCE_A_level_L3_in_Spanish.pdf)

See the document "Sample Assessment Materials" (SAMs) p199, **Indicative content for Task 2 Part 1, independent research presentation** p199 for an example of how to do the presentation.

[https://qualifications.pearson.com/content/dam/pdf/A%20Level/Spanish/2016/S pecification%20and%20sample%20assessments/SAMs\\_GCE\\_A\\_level\\_L3\\_in\\_Spanish.pdf](https://qualifications.pearson.com/content/dam/pdf/A%20Level/Spanish/2016/S pecification%20and%20sample%20assessments/SAMs_GCE_A_level_L3_in_Spanish.pdf)

In the most successful presentations, well-prepared candidates did the 'Magic 6' that is to say they did the following:

1. Name source 1
2. Name source 2

3. Summarise Source 1
4. Summarise Source 2
5. React to Source 1
6. React to Source 2

### **A good example of a presentation**

In the presentation below introducing the IRP on the topic of the Inditex Group, the student gives a clear and detailed summary of the two sources and a clear and convincing personal response with justification.

Mi información viene del libro 'Grupo Inditex' de Ignacio Aguirre 2012 y del libro 'Zara Visión y Estrategia de Amancio Ortega', de David Martínez 2019.

Aguirre explica las complejidades dentro del exitoso negocio y explica cómo comenzó todo y cómo continúa siendo un pináculo de la industria textil. El autor explora todo el proceso de fabricación, distribución global y estilos de gestión y la forma en que Inditex opera.

Mientras que Martínez analiza la vida de Amancio Ortega, y a través del análisis de la vida y la carrera descubre cómo la gestión, las estrategias y los principios, están íntimamente relacionados con su influyente visión dentro del mundo de la moda.

Encontré muy interesante el punto de vista más biográfico de Martínez, porque vincula los aspectos prácticos con el hombre que está detrás de la empresa, pero la descripción general informativa de Aguirre, me pareció un análisis más profundo y útil para mí.

### **Advice from examiners on the presentation**

- Read and observe the requirements of the presentation in order to access the full range of marks for AO2 (see links above for guidance).
- Send in correctly completed IRP forms. This will help the examiner to identify the sources. See the Specification pages 22-24 "**Guidance on the independent research project**".  
[https://qualifications.pearson.com/content/dam/pdf/A%20Level/Spanish/2016/Specification%20and%20sample%20assessments/Specification\\_GCE\\_A\\_level\\_L3\\_in\\_Spanish.pdf](https://qualifications.pearson.com/content/dam/pdf/A%20Level/Spanish/2016/Specification%20and%20sample%20assessments/Specification_GCE_A_level_L3_in_Spanish.pdf)
- Do the 'Magic 6' mentioned above.
- Make sure the presentation is about the sources used for the research, not about the general topic.
- Stick closely to the two minute timing. Mention the essential six points within the two minutes.

- Presentations delivered at a very fast speed and with unnatural intonation in order to cram in more information can lack clarity. Speak at a normal speed and with natural intonation.
- Chose articles where the authors' points of view are clear and perhaps either opposing or contrasting.
- Teacher-examiners must allow candidates to speak uninterrupted for two minutes, unless the presentation finishes earlier. Anything the candidate says after an interruption is not considered for AO2.

## **Task 2, Part 2 - IRP Discussion**

Once again, there was a huge range of topics this year. Many worked really well, especially when it was clear the candidate had a genuine interest in the topic. The most successful were when the topic is related to a specific historical event, a festival, the influence of a particular person, for example. Topics which had a wider focus tended to be superficial. Centres should advise candidates to choose a narrow focus for the topic, rather than aiming too widely, as this allows the candidate to research with greater depth.

Some candidates chose popular topics (eg Real Madrid vs Barca rivalry, Pablo Escobar – hero or villain, Rosalía). As long as these topics demonstrated extensive research and strong evaluative skills, their discussions were fresh and interesting.

Examiners commented on the occasional IRP topics which risked falling outside societal context and therefore losing marks for AO4, for example Spanish colonialism in the Philippines, a discussion point about bullfighting which dwelt on the work of a Dutch animal rights organisation, a comparison of the Spanish and English diets, the impact of African culture on Cuba. The main focus of the IRP topic must be firmly on Spanish or Hispanic culture.

A few candidates seemed very unprepared and relied heavily on much examiner prompting.

In a small number of tests, the candidates did not sound natural and spontaneous. In some cases, it was clear that the candidates had learnt the content by heart, without full understanding of what they were saying.

### **An example of a good IRP response**

*Q. Mencionaste el independentismo catalán. ¿Por qué se manifestaron tantas personas contra el independentismo?*

*A. Si, creo que lo hicieron por querer expresarse en contra de las acciones independentistas porque había muchos episodios violentos por las manos de independentistas que..y estas movilizaciones querían decir que la sociedad española no estuviera a favor de la violencia y a favor de intentar a convencer a*

*la gente que siguieron haciendo algo que debería ser ilegal o es ilegal, entonces diría que lo hicieron para decir no a esta forma de violencia.*

The candidate gave a succinct but considered answer to a linguistically simple yet conceptually complex question. This candidate was spontaneous and thought well on their feet producing a well reasoned answer with a clear conclusion.

### **Advice from the examiner on the IRP discussion**

- Choose a topic with a specific focus that is suitable for in-depth analysis
- IRP titles must be either a question or a statement.
- The topic must be related to Spanish-speaking society and culture.
- Gather enough material to be able to have a discussion for about 10 minutes.
- Show evidence of serious research undertaken over the last year of the A level course.
- Include concrete information such as details, facts, figures, but also analyse, that is to say, draw conclusions and give opinions, based on this information.
- IRPs about pre-hispanic civilisations must be linked to Hispanic society and culture.

### **Advice to teacher-examiners on the conduct of the test**

- Adhere to the timings for the different parts of the text.
- Announce the number of the stimulus card and declaration chosen at the start of the test.
- The scores for Interaction were sometimes lowered because teacher-examiners allowed long speeches and monologues without interaction. Teachers should interrupt candidates with a question responding to a point they have made.
- Avoid giving long answers to the candidates' questions. Give a brief response and move the discussion along.
- Avoid personal questions about students' interests, plans, or why they chose the topic. They do not require an exchange of views and do not show the knowledge necessary at A Level.
- Engage the candidate in a natural conversation. Listen to the candidate and respond by linking your questions to what they have said in a natural manner.
- Teachers' questions must give candidates the opportunity to express ideas and show their knowledge of culture and society.

### **RP3 forms**

The majority of RP3 forms were correctly completed and uploaded to LWT.

It is essential that examiners are able to view the written sources when marking AO2.

RP3 forms must give details of original Spanish language written sources. In a small number of cases, the presentation sources were translations from original English or German documents. A few students listed a documentary was listed as the first "written" source.

### **Administrative matters**

This was the second year of using the Learner Work Transfer/Learner Work Access platform. There were very few problems this year with missing or incorrect materials, these issues were quickly resolved.

The procedures for conducting the examination are set out in the GCE Modern Foreign Languages Conducting Speaking Assessment Administrative Support Guide. The 2023 guide is available on the Pearson website:

[https://qualifications.pearson.com/content/dam/pdf/A\\_Level/French/2016/forms-and-administration/AdminSupportGuide\\_2020.pdf](https://qualifications.pearson.com/content/dam/pdf/A_Level/French/2016/forms-and-administration/AdminSupportGuide_2020.pdf)

