



Pearson
Edexcel

Examiners' Report
Principal Examiner Feedback

October 2020

Pearson Edexcel GCE
In SPANISH (9SP0_01)
Paper 1: Listening, Reading and Translation

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Paper 9SP01 is composed of three distinct sections: Section A is listening, Section B is reading and Section C is translating from Spanish into English. In Section A and B there are both multiple-choice and open response questions to be answered in Spanish. The translation in Section C is the only question where English is required. Texts are drawn from the 12 sub-themes from the specification and include fiction and non-fiction, literary, historical and contemporary texts. Over the 10 questions, most of the 12 sub-themes will be covered.

The November 2020 series was exceptional in having only a very small cohort compared with previous series, due to the issuing of Centre Assessed Grades for the vast majority of Year 13 students in Summer 2020.

Q01 was a listening text based on an interview with a veteran of the Spanish Civil War.

Q02 was an open-response question worth 5 marks. It was based on concerns over the influence held by anonymous Youtubers on the university choices of their followers. The question was on the whole answered well. A common error found in this question was in (b), where some answers referred to a *decisión personal* without making it clear to what this referred. Some answers also suggested that the influence was on the university course itself, rather than the choice of course. Very few candidates correctly answered (d), which required them to understand that *Pepito Pérez* was used as an example of any anonymous Youtuber.

Q03 was a longer listening passage adapted from the memories of a lady who lived through the years of Spain's Transition period. Four of the questions were generally answered correctly, while (a) and (d) were much more of a challenge, due to the level of detail required. In (a) it was necessary to show that the lady had mixed feelings about the dictatorship. Answers that stated that her memories were either positive or negative did not score. In (d), it was necessary to explain that some people did not agree with Suárez or his policies or that the leftist parties were included; answers simply saying that some people did not agree, was insufficient for a mark. One other common error worth noting is the mistake that many candidates made in (f) when trying to transcribe *pendiente de un hilo*. While strong candidates accurately inferred from this that democracy was fragile, a number of candidates wrote *pendiente de un nilo*, *un ilo* or even *unirlo*. While *ilo* was accepted as a spelling mistake, the others were considered too far from the correct version.

Q04 was based on a 2011 documentary about young people and unemployment in Spain. There were two parts to this question: the first 6 marks available were for open-response questions about the introduction, while another 6 marks were available for summaries of the subsequent interviews. In Q04(a)(i), more candidates recognised that these young people had a high level of education than that they were the first generation to have been born into a democracy. Some candidates stated that they had *altas aspiraciones*, when the text, in fact, said that now they do not. In Q04(a)(ii), more candidates were able to state the negative consequence to the world but not that young people will lose out personally. An error worth noting here is the lack of a subject that led to some answers being too unclear to earn a mark. The question asks "what will be the consequences...", so answers starting just with *Van a perder*, seem to refer to consequences, as there is no other plural noun in the question. It cannot be assumed that 'they' refers to young people. The summary questions were attempted successfully in most cases, although some candidates were tempted to write far more than a summary. Only one detail is needed for each of the bullet points.

Q05 was an article about Spain's treatment of young Spaniards from immigrant families. Candidates had to select a correct ending to four sentences.

For **Q06**, candidates had to select four correct statements out of a bank of nine. This question was based on a description of the *Entierro de la Sardina* festival.

In **Q07**, candidates read about the popularity and future of the music of Costa Rica. The inclusion of the popular adjective *tico* to mean the people and products of Costa Rica seemed to pose no particular problem to candidates. Answers to Q07(b) were often awarded only one of the two available marks, as few candidates stated that the music of Costa Rica was rarely played on the radio. Instead they said that the radio only plays *lo que juzga popular*. Some answers to Q07(c) were not sufficiently clear, stating only *Fusionarla*, but not saying with what or else recommending no *olvidar su identidad*, without saying that this identity needs to be incorporated into the music. Some candidates did not recognise the difference between *música* and *músicos*, so their answers did not make sense.

Q08 was a long passage about immigration and social exclusion. Sections (a) and (b) were the most challenging. For Q08(a), many candidates ignored the question word *quiénes* and gave answers such as *la pobreza* and *la toxicomania*. It is always essential to respond appropriately to the question, which may require manipulation or interpretation of the information given in the text. Candidates who relentlessly copy words and phrases from the text because they mention something referred to in the question, run the risk of missing out on available marks. As this was a three -mark question, examiners took the decision to penalise such answers only once, so candidates who gave a list of three states, rather than people could still be credited with two out of the three marks. It was pleasing to read answers where candidates had correctly interpreted the information to give answers such as *los pobres* or *los que sufren de la pobreza*. Q08(b) was a demanding question, only correctly answered by the strongest candidates. Correct answers referred to the fact that the number given was the lowest estimated figure or an approximate figure.

Q09 was another long passage, adapted from the novel *Pedro Páramo*, by Juan Rulfo, with open response questions and answers in Spanish, worth 8 marks. It concerned the journey of the main character to the town of his mother's birth and the home of the man he believed to be his father. Although Q09(a) was largely answered successfully, there were a significant number of candidates who just said that his mother asked him, rather than mentioning that she was on her death bed. Section (c) was not often awarded both marks. Answers saying that the mother had never gone back, for example, did not really give an idea of her feelings. Answers saying that she wanted to return or felt nostalgia for Comala were what were required for a mark. Q09(d) again often resulted in only one mark being awarded of the possible two. Many candidates acknowledged that the town looked sad or that it was not as his mother had described. Fewer were able to gain the second mark for stating that very few people went to Comala anymore.

Section C is a translation passage from Spanish into English, marked as 20 discrete sections. There were a number of sections aimed at each grade from E to A*, so that almost all candidates were able to score marks for some elements of the passage, but only the strongest candidates were able to score full marks. The passage was from the sub-theme of the impact of tourism and concerned students studying tourism with the aim of starting a business in a rural area. The majority of errors arose not from misunderstanding the text, but from difficulties in expressing the meaning accurately in English. There was often too great a dependence on Spanish word order. This was particularly apparent in the sentence including the phrase *ha aumentado el número de estudiantes que se matriculan en Turismo con el fin de...* False friends also caused some issues: translations of *zona*, *se respiraría* and *supone* were frequently unsuccessful. The word "the" was inserted too often, e.g. "The rural tourism" or "the nature"; this gives rise to ambiguity in English as someone who had not read the original text might be confused into thinking that this is about a specific type of rural tourism or the nature of something specific.

The vocabulary items that proved most difficult were: *brinda*, *frenar*, *despoblación*, *se matriculan*, *casa de huéspedes*, *desafiaría*, *lo que sí...*, *nada más abrir* and *promocionar*. *Se trata de una ocupación* was often unsuccessfully translated. All that was required was

something like "It is an occupation". The emphasis suggested by *lo que sí cambiaría* needed to be evident in the English translation. No mark was awarded for "What will change", as the emphatic nature of the *sí* has been overlooked. Strong candidates were able to use phrases such as "The thing that definitely will change" or "What really will be a change is". A common phrase that proved difficult was *En los últimos años*. This could not be credited when translated as "In the last years" as to an English speaker this could suggest some sort of apocalyptic period at the end of human history. "In the last few years" or "In recent years" was a meaningful translation.

There were occasions where candidates offered an either/or choice to examiners. This is a risky strategy that should be discouraged. Examiners (or any English-speaker who needs to understand the translation) should not have to decide for the candidate which word is better. It is the job of the candidate to make the appropriate word selection. Marks are likely to be withheld where two non-identical ideas are given.

Given the performance in this exam, students are offered the following advice:

- Take care when transcribing unfamiliar words, especially where there may be a silent letter or two of the same letter next to each other in a sentence.
- A summary should be brief. The instructions tell you that you need to give only three details for each summary. If you give three details for just one of the bullet points, you are at risk of not gaining any marks for the two subsequent bullet points.
- Reread your answers; does your answer logically match the question, e.g. if asked "who", have you given an answer to "what"?
- Check whether the subject of each verb you write is clear, e.g. is it obvious who is going to lose out if you write "van a perder"?
- When tackling the translation, remember that English and Spanish word order is different.
- Do not overuse the article "the" in the translation. In English this suggests you are referring to something specific.