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Examiners' Report  
Principal Examiner Feedback

Summer 2022

Pearson Edexcel GCE  
In Spanish (9SP0)  
Paper 3A/B Speaking

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## **Introduction**

Summer 2022 was the first time after a two-year break that this examination had taken place. In spite of the long break and the fact that, for many students this was their first experience of external examinations, the standard of performance was generally high. Examiners reported that they had enjoyed listening to many well-prepared candidates and genuinely fascinating IRP discussions. Unfortunately, there was also a significant proportion of tests, in which the centres did not follow the guidance on how to conduct the exam. Examiners were as tolerant as possible, but there were a number of tests in which the students lost marks due to incorrect preparation or conduct. Centres are urged to refer to the advice in this report and to the guidance available for future series. There are links to the relevant resources in this report.

## **Task 1**

### **Knowledge and understanding of society and culture (A04)**

The questions on each stimulus card were designed to elicit a response which would demonstrate the candidates' knowledge and understanding of Spain or the Hispanic world. Most candidates were able to answer a variety of questions different aspects of the themes. Answers were at times excellently developed and many candidates could give details such as facts, figures, and percentages, and use topic-specific vocabulary.

Although many students were able to demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the Spanish-speaking world, examiners noticed a lack of up-to-date information.

Some native and near native speakers, although displaying an excellent command of the language, only answered with anecdotes or did not explain their points sufficiently, some candidates drew on examples from their own experience without further analysis.

### **Accuracy and range of language (A03)**

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 the use 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*.
- Use of unconjugated verbs.
- No use of the subjunctive.
- Wrong adjectival agreements and incorrect genders for vocabulary that should be known 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".

## **Interaction (AO1)**

Most candidates remembered to ask questions although, with less able candidates, it was a little contrived. Some candidates introduced questions naturally with use of phrases such as *¿me sigues?* or *¿entiendes lo que digo?*, which helped the discussion to flow rather than pre-prepared questions such as *¿qué piensas del problema de...?* Some candidates employed strategies such as *déjame pensar un momento, que yo sepa, pues*, to give themselves a little breathing space. This approach sounded natural and avoided long, silent pauses.

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

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

#### **Card SP1**

Along with Card 3, this card was the most frequently chosen. Most candidates were able to provide meaningful information. Some gave impressive answers giving lots of information and analysis, however there were a few whose answers were very general and not supported by evidence, e.g. '*la sociedad española es muy sexista*', When it came to changes in the family structure and attitudes to marriage, candidates spoke a lot about gay marriage but did not refer to more recent developments, such as changes in divorce laws.

#### **Card SP2**

On the topic of the world of work, candidates frequently mentioned the 2008 financial crisis, which was largely over before the pandemic hit and the Spanish economy had grown at almost the fastest rate in the Euro zone in 2018/19. Examiners heard little information about more recent news, which would have helped marks for AO4.

#### **Card SP3**

There were many cases where students spoke, for example, about the challenges of tourism without mentioning the fact that the hospitality industry closed down during the pandemic or the government's response to the situation. Examiners also heard about the contribution of tourism to the GDP of Spain, but the information was not contextualised into the events of the last two years.

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

#### **Card 4**

Candidates reacted to the controversial stance of the statement in SP4A regarding the negative influence of music on young Spaniards. Some agreed with this citing '*letras machistas*' and '*el reguetón*'. All agreed that music was an integral part of hispanic culture and has a strong influence on young people that can often be positive. Many candidates demonstrated genuine interest, knowledge, and enjoyment of Hispanic music by referring to artists and songs. Candidates who chose SP4B were able to give views on different types of music in the Hispanic world both traditional and contemporary. In some cases they were able to demonstrate how modern artists had incorporated older traditions into their repertoire.

## **Card 5**

A common mistake with this topic is that follow on questions do not guide students to talk about the Spanish-speaking world. In some cases, examiners could not tell whether candidates were referring to Hispanic culture or making general observations that could have been about any country. When discussing the media, it is important to make clear reference to Hispanic culture in order to gain credit for AO4.

## **Card SP6**

This card was well done when candidates had clearly studied specific examples of Hispanic traditions and festivals and could not only describe the events and their origins, but also provide analysis, such as the changes in traditions or their impact on communities.

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

### **SP7**

The economic contribution of immigrants was mainly limited to the idea that they do jobs that Spanish people don't want and that they are mainly working in agriculture and construction. There was little mention of the '*economía sumergida*' or of the professional class or retired northern Europeans. The cultural contributions were often about food and gastronomy and often referred to Al-Andalus which, being distant history, is of limited relevance to the topic of immigration in a modern day context. Also there was little mention of the way small villages in the south of Spain are seeing a revival culturally because they have ageing indigenous populations and immigrants are building new communities.

### **SP8**

Responses on SP8 tended to be less successful than those for SP7. Few candidates could give examples of measures or policies to help the integration of immigrants. Many mentioned the difficulties that immigrants face in finding accommodation due to landlords' prejudice. Some candidates were able to make reference to current affairs by mentioning the challenges facing newly arrived Ukrainian refugees in Spain.

### **SP9**

Candidates often missed the fact that borders were closed during the pandemic, the effect of Brexit on British retirees and the massive issue with '*Los menas*'. They generally knew about the rise of VOX and 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**

Candidates who chose the cards from Theme 4 with historical context tended to score highly on knowledge and understanding (AO4), perhaps because those who choose this theme have an interest in the topic, and it is almost impossible to stray away from the context of the Spanish-speaking world. The majority of candidates who chose this theme had strong factual knowledge. The best performances were impressive and demonstrated a coherent understanding of the causes and consequences of the events of the period.

## **Card 10**

Candidates were generally able to demonstrate knowledge about the support which the two bands received during the Civil War. The questions on the reasons for Franco's victory were less clearly understood.

### **Card 11**

Few candidates chose this card. Those who did were able to discuss the relationship between Franco's regime and the Catholic Church and to explain the influence of the Church in the society of the period.

### **Card 12**

Again, few chose this card. There were a small number of excellent discussions in which students showed clear understanding of Suárez' role in the transition to democracy. Candidates also knew about actions of King Juan Carlos during the attempted coup in 1981.

### **Advice from examiner**

- Remember that after asking the questions on the stimulus card, the follow-on discussion should move to a different sub-theme from that of the card in order to show breadth of understanding.
- During the follow-on discussion, the discussion should be naturally developed. Examiners should interrupt long speeches with questions which pick up on the points the student has made.
- Include up-to-date information to meet the description of "relevant" and "pertinent" in the Knowledge and Understanding grid (AO4).
- Remember to include facts and information. Opinions which are not supported by evidence will not score highly in AO4.
- Avoid the common language errors noted above.
- Remember that students 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.

There appeared to be considerable issues with clarity as to the required format of the presentation in many centres. Those who followed the guidance had some good results, however many did not seem to have read the Specification at all. Some Teacher-Examiners interrupted and prompted candidates during the presentation, which is not allowed. There were many candidates who used the presentation to give a general introduction to the topic without mentioning any sources. In some cases it was difficult to know if any sources had been used when centres did not send the IRP forms.

Candidates' performance largely depends on what the Centre has advised them to do. In centres where the teacher has carefully read the mark scheme and the guidance in the Specification and has given the correct advice, candidates are likely to be more successful than those in a centre where they have not had the correct advice. In the majority of tests, candidates correctly mentioned two named sources, and gave a summary of the main points but then offered a generalised personal response on the topic, not on the two sources.

Some candidates offered a presentation with no mention of sources at all and therefore scored zero out of twelve. A small number of cases were unable to score because they referred to video sources, or to sources originally in English.

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/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)

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

### **Good example of a personal response in the presentation**

An aspect of the presentation which many candidates did not do well was the personal response to the written sources. Below is a very good example of a convincing personal response with a clear justification. The topic was the dictatorship in Argentina:

*...Para resumir, ambas fuentes están basadas en testimonios y me hicieron pensar en lo injusto de las detenciones ilegales y las espantosas condiciones a las que los detenidos fueron sometidos. La primera es más fiable porque es más una descripción del lugar y de lo que pasó allí, y es una fuente procedente del gobierno porque se basa en testimonios contados en los juicios. La segunda es más periodística, y hace hincapié en las emociones de las personas. Son recuerdos contados directamente a la periodista y la memoria no es siempre fiable...*

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...*

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

### **Advice from the examiner 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.

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

There were many examples of outstanding work, and examiners found it a real pleasure to listen to the discussions on a great variety of themes.

For the better performing candidates, there was evidence of in-depth knowledge and the ability to make connections within the context of the Hispanic world. The more successful discussions tended to have a definite point of focus on a particular person, event, or issue.

In one excellent example, the candidate spoke about the effect of the pandemic on wine production in Spain. The candidate mentioned the disruption of lockdowns on work in the vineyards, the fact that closed borders had limited the availability of



immigrant workers and caused issues with transportation. The discussion extended into the way the profile of consumers of wine had changed. Where previously the bulk of sales was to bars, during the pandemic supermarkets became the main outlets because the hospitality industry was closed. The candidate spoke about the 'fine wines' industry, how 'degustación' was not possible and foreign buyers were not able to come to Spain. The situation had the unusual effect in supermarkets of improving the quality of the wine and lowering the price, as sellers responded to the different demands. This discussion was original, well researched and analytical. It was confined to a single issue in a specific time-period, enabling the candidate to go into real depth and show genuine insights.

Carefully chosen key headings on the IRP facilitate discussion and analysis. One good example about the Cuban revolution included the following headings on the IRP form which produced a strong, analytical discussion.

- Reasons leading to the revolution
- Immediate consequences
- Reaction of the USA
- Attacks by the CIA a. Sabotage b. Operation Mongoose c. biological warfare
- Cuban internationalism
- Health and Medical research
- International attitudes to the embargo.

The following example about modern attitudes to the conquest of Latin America demonstrates a relevant and perceptive response (AO4):

*Q: Volviendo al tema de la destrucción de la cultura indígena, ¿debería España disculparse por sus acciones en el pasado?*

*A: Según AMLO, o sea Andrés Manuel López Obrador, el presidente de México, sí. Él envió cartas al rey español y también al papa pidiendo que ellos pidan disculpas por las acciones de España durante la conquista, y también durante el imperio español. Los dos dijeron que no, que no debemos juzgar las acciones del pasado a través de las opiniones de hoy en día.*

Less successful presentations often had a topic that was too wide to go into real depth and so produced somewhat superficial and descriptive responses. The discussions about the drug cartels in Mexico or Pablo Escobar or El Chapo (often inspired by television series) tended to lack social context and insights into the wider issues facing the country. Discussions about footballers or football teams, for example, were often chosen by candidates who offered a rather generalised view without analysis of culture and society.

Other less successful approaches included discussions on bullfighting which lack any information on the industry itself and even what happens in a 'corrida'. A number of candidates chose to talk about the situation of women from Franco to today but stayed within the realm of clichés and general information. Some did not analyse the changes which occurred during Franco's 40 years in power. A few candidates seemed not to consider that 47 years have passed since the end of Franco's regime.

With the topic of immigration, it would be advisable for candidates to refer to the current situation and not only to distant history such as the influence of Arabic on the language and the food many centuries ago.

Some IRPs were too narrow. The candidates had limited information and gave only personal opinions (often rather repetitive). Some candidates did not research in depth. Many forgot to include a question or a statement as the title of their IRP and also failed to give the IRP an analytical angle, resulting in answers with lots of fact and figures but no convincing conclusions.

The range of IRP titles was enormous and far too broad to list. Many were completely fascinating and a pleasure to listen to. Below is a small selection some original and well-researched titles:

- *¿Hasta qué punto afectó la infancia de Franco a su régimen?*
- *¿Cómo impactaron los Juegos Olímpicos de 1992 en la economía y el turismo en España*
- *¿Hay una falta de la cultura sefardí en España hoy en día?*
- *¿Cómo ha cambiado la presencia española en la Formula Uno desde el año 1950?*
- *La vida de Lin Manuel Miranda y cómo ha provocado la diversidad en el teatro*
- *¿Cómo afecta a México el negocio de los aguacates en la región de Michoacán?*
- *¿Hasta qué punto la clase social determina el acceso a los servicios odontológicos en España?*
- *¿Cómo se censuró el cine durante la dictadura franquista?*
- *España figura entre los principales países de destino del tráfico de mujeres y niñas para la prostitución*
- *¿Fue el caso Gürdel uno de los más graves escándalos políticos de España?*
- *Los Zapatistas han creado su propio sistema de organización comunitaria en las montañas de México*
- *¿Se puede justificar la inquisición española?*
- *¿Cómo están representados los grupos marginalizados en el cine español?*
- *¿Está el servicio sanitario urbano cubano a la altura de su posición ejemplar?*
- *¿Hasta qué punto tiene la civilización azteca un impacto en el México de hoy?*
- *¿Quién fue La Malinche y cuál es su significación cultural moderna?*
- *¿Ha gozado México de plena libertad de expresión desde 1968 hasta la actualidad?*

### **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.

### **Visiting Examiners 9SP0\_3B**

This year, Visiting Examining was complicated by the lingering presence of COVID-19, especially when the visits were being planned.

It is clear that, in many centres, the option of having a VE is still much appreciated. The candidates gathered together as a group in both morning and afternoon sessions to receive their briefing and this continues to be a valuable part of the process as it does seem to reassure the large majority of candidates. It was noticeable that candidates this year did seem more nervous and apprehensive than in previous years, presumably because this cohort has had a stressful time and a lack of exam practice over the past two years.

VEs and candidates wore face masks, so VEs spoke a more slowly and deliberately than normal in order to facilitate clear communication, particularly when asking a complex question. This approach helped as candidates effectively gained a little extra thinking time and were, on many occasions, able to produce a fuller and more considered response.

Although most centres which requested a VE seemed to be reluctant to take advantage of the online option, those who did, found it worked extremely well. The candidates appeared for their briefing as normal and the sound and video picture were very clear. The online option offered the Centre more choice and it was easy to reschedule an absent candidate. The candidates were comfortable with the online approach as it is a normal means of communication for them. Some teachers commented that candidates found the exam less daunting online.

### **Administrative matters**

From the examiners' perspective, the Learner Work Assessment portal made a big difference in terms of ease of receiving and marking scripts. Examiners were

appreciative of the fact that the majority of centres uploaded all the required documentation in the correct format.

Examiners need to see three files for each candidate: the recording of the test, the RP3 form and the CS4 form. Difficulties arose when centres did not upload the correct paperwork and, in some cases, it took weeks to get all of the materials. It is to the candidate's advantage if the examiner is able to see the list of sources and headings for discussion on the RP3 form before marking the test. As part of the marking process, examiners must check the forms. If some materials are missing, it could cause a delay in a candidate receiving a grade.

The procedures for conducting the examination are set out in the GCE Modern Foreign Languages Conducting Speaking Assessment Administrative Support Guide. The 2022 guide is available on the Pearson website:

[https://qualifications.pearson.com/content/dam/pdf/A%20Level/French/2016/forms-and-administration/AdminSupportGuide\\_2020.pdf](https://qualifications.pearson.com/content/dam/pdf/A%20Level/French/2016/forms-and-administration/AdminSupportGuide_2020.pdf)