GCE

Spanish

Advanced GCE F721

Unit 1: Speaking

Teacher Support Booklet

Exemplar Responses with Commentaries

Contents

The recordings of these examinations can be downloaded free of charge from Interchange. They can be found by following the link : Resources & Materials/exam resources/past papers and mark schemes. Select AS/A Level GCE, select Spanish, click on folders named : "F721 Spanish – Exemplar Speaking Responses 1 and 2".

Role play A: Plus Bus (13)

The candidate makes a valiant attempt to rise to the demands of this role play and is helped by sympathetic examining. She is, however, held back by linguistic uncertainty and she remains heavily dependent on the examiner to maintain the pace of the exchange, which seldom goes beyond simple question and answer. Her answers are mostly characterised by limited range of structure, basic inaccuracies and lack of extension.

The candidate attempts the opening questions but with limited / faulty manipulation of structures: *¿Cuántas personas en tu familia?; ¿Hace viaje en autobús?* = <u>Do</u> you travel…?

There is some ambiguity, both in content and linguistically, to the candidate's first content point (*cuando limitar tu viaje a lugares en tu municipo*). She does however communicate the information that PlusBus is a convenient way of buying a ticket and suggests that it combines rail and bus travel. She also refers to some aspects of the pricing arrangements and reductions for children aged 5-15 (*ellos pacaron el medio de precio*).

She appears to misunderstand the question whether you can use PlusBus for more than one journey – i.e. unlimited travel; instead she offers information that you can use PlusBus with a return ticket or *"un billete para todos días en el año"*, a different content point.

The candidate has difficulty in replying to the question *"¿Dónde se usa este sistema?"* and needs a number of re-phrasings from the examiner, including closed questions - *(¿en muchas ciudades*?). She eventually offers *"en la mayoría sitios en Gran Bretaña"*, but without accurately quantifying the "more than 200 towns and cities" of the stimulus material.

In response to the question about where tickets can be bought, she mentions *"visitar el websitio"* or telephone. With some ambiguity, the information about further discounts available to railcard holders is only partly conveyed.

The candidate makes a reasonable effort in her response to the first extension question about her preferred mode of transport and with a comparison between bus and train. She is less confident in the follow-up question about public transport, where hesitation and language difficulties feature largely.

Overall the candidate's performance under Grid A (Use of stimulus) is uneven. She successfully conveys about half of the points, albeit with ambiguity, and scores 8.

Response to the examiner is limited and there is frequent hesitation. Most replies are very brief and some responses are unfinished or answer the wrong question. The exercise remains very much a question-and-answer routine and it is the examiner and not the candidate who does most of the work in the exchange, with little initiative of imagination (with the possible exception of the first extension question) being shown by the candidate. She never seems to "sell" the product and the element of the task *"convencerle de que vale la pena utilizar los servicios que ofrece"* is missing. Mark awarded for Grid B is 3.

Language is limited and frequently faulty, rarely attempting to rise above GCSE level. Many sentences have verbs missing, or are incomplete in other aspects of syntax. Although meaning is sometimes conveyed adequately, there are other occasions where linguistic shortcomings compound the ambiguity. Basic slips include agreements (*una manera … convenientes; muchas descuentos; niños que regresa*); idiom (*el transporte de público; web sitio; solicitar para …; prefiero viaje*) and elementary errors (*uno libre; pacaron* (= pagan ?) *todos días*), etc. Overall, under Grid C1 (Quality of language), there is "evidence of gaps in basic grammar may be strongly influenced by the candidate's first language" and the candidate is awarded 2.

Topic (16)

The candidate's topic is on family life and is based on study of a film. She has a reasonable overall knowledge of the content of the work, or at least the story, but it is important to realise that Grid D assesses "Ideas, opinions and relevance". Actual knowledge, whether factual or fictitious is relevant in so far as it provides material in support of a point of view and the mere ability to relate a plot or give a biography is not in itself a key issue. Much more important is the expression and development of ideas and the ability to discuss and justify these by putting the knowledge in context.

This said, the topic section follows the headings on the candidate's topic form but the treatment is heavily slanted towards the factual or descriptive. The candidate is usually adequately armed with examples from the story or the characters, but is rather lacking in ideas or in understanding and explaining the significance of these examples.

The candidate has obviously prepared material in response to the topic headings, though she is not always able to recognise the relevance of the examiner's questions if the form of the question is not as expected. There is a strong tendency to give a prepared answer even when this is not strictly relevant to the actual question: e.g. *¿Por qué acepta un trabajo…? – Sí.* The examiner offers the candidate an opportunity to give an opinion or a personal response to the situation: *Si tú fueras Blanca*…., *qué dirías tú?,* but the candidate takes this as a cue for another factual / descriptive example from the story. She finds some difficulty when dealing with even a basic personal response, for example, which of the characters she would like as a friend and why, though she does persist with the latter.

Overall, the candidate shows some ability to explain ideas, though not to develop these. There are some basic opinions and she is able to convey basic but not extensive information. The information she gives is hermetically sealed within the context of the film and does not really develop the theme or place it in perspective within the AS topic area. For Grid D (Ideas, opinions and relevance) the mark awarded is 5.

In her replies the candidate is highly dependent on prepared material and anticipated questions. Even here, she is often hesitant, though she does at times attempt to extend the answer, but with inconsistent relevance. The candidate relies on the examiner to pace the exercise and there is little real discussion of the ideas. She is awarded 4 for Grid E1 (Fluency, spontaneity, responsiveness.

Language overall is adequate and essential points are conveyed without ambiguity. There are basic errors of agreement and idiom, e.g. *la manera rápido obtener; para María ir al baño*; *puedes comprende; depende en*, etc., but generally is fit for purpose. There is "evidence of fair understanding of grammatical usage… performance is likely to be inconsistent" and so the mark awarded for Grid C1 is 3.

Pronunciation is mostly quite reasonable – there are some slips, particularly with confusion c /j *(por equemplo*) and voicing of h (*jicos*) – but vowel sounds are generally clear and other consonants – including r and d – generally correct. Hesitant delivery does not help her intonation but overall pronunciation and intonation are generally accurate. Mark for Grid G (Pronunciation and intonation) is 4.

Although towards the bottom of the range, this candidate's performance meets the requirements of the Specification and she is working at a level consistent with AS.

Role play B: Spinnaker Tower (20)

The candidate asks his two initial questions quite well, with a minor slip in syntax in the first: *(¿Cuántas personas son en tu grupo?)* and with a minimum manipulation in the second *(¿Qué son los intereses del grupo?)*.

There is a slight hiatus at the start of the role play – the examiner prompts with *¿Dónde está la torre?* and the candidate gives some details (not quite clearly) of the tower's significance and location. With some linguistic weaknesses (*el torre; en un bueno día puedes ver para miles*) he mentions the appeal of the tower by day and at night (*es muy romántico*). He refers to the glass floor and its significance and also to the nearby attractions of the ships, boat rides and quantity of shops etc. Details are also given of the opening times. The candidate is reminded that one of the visitors uses a wheelchair and replies accordingly (*personas sin movilidad*). Discounts for groups are conveyed and contact details, but again with some linguistic slips (*si los billetes son compran antes tu visito*).

The candidate makes quite good use of the stimulus material overall and conveys about three quarters of the points, though with some lack of clarity, and is awarded 11 for Grid A.

There is a tendency for the conversation to become a summary exercise at times, but there is sufficient interchange between the candidate and examiner for a role play to start to develop. The candidate remains fairly dependent on the examiner to set the agenda and control the pace and pattern of the exchange, but the candidate's replies and the extension of his utterances are enough to put him in the middle band. He is reasonably forthcoming in the extension questions on organising the visit and the values of tourism. Overall, he just attains 6 for response to examiner (Grid B) – "responds satisfactorily … some appropriate replies / imagination in developing answers… performance inconsistent".

Language again is somewhat inconsistent. The candidate has enough command of essential language to convey the meaning without significant ambiguity and is able to construct reasonably extended sentences. There are mistakes in idiom (*más que /de; después a; en el veinticinco de diciembre*) and some other weaknesses, for example with verbs. However he has produced a reasonable amount of serviceable Spanish and has done just enough to score a borderline 3 for Grid C1 (evidence of fair understanding of grammatical usage… performance patchy and inconsistent).

Topic (19)

For his topic the candidate chooses sport, and in particular Fernando Alonso. A danger with this type of topic is that it can get bogged down in biographical detail and factual information at the expense of the development of ideas and opinions being looked for under Grid D. He does justify his choice of subject in response to the examiner's opening question: *"es un buen modelo para estudiantes…"*. There is a fair amount of biographical detail at the start, and care should be taken in a discussion to seek the relevance of any such detail and avoid the mere recitation of events and years. Nevertheless, here, the candidate manages to relate the influence of Alonso's childhood to his subsequent ambitions and career. There is a reasonable interchange between the examiner and candidate about these influences and the candidate is able to develop some of the ideas initially offered. Further questioning shows that he can draw intelligent inferences and conclusions from the factual information he offers and he achieves 7 for Ideas, opinions and relevance: "able to develop and explain ideas and to express points of view with some justification".

The candidate is a little hesitant in places but does manage to extend his replies and offer some appropriate justifications. He remains dependent on the examiner to shape the conversation and never gets to the stage of the higher bands to direct the exchange. However the examiner keeps him working with some appropriate questioning to allow him to develop the ideas. He is reasonably fluent and spontaneous some of the time – he does not give the impression of mentally reading from a pre-learnt script – and is awarded 6 for Grid E1 (Fluency, spontaneity, responsiveness).

Language again is rather mixed. The candidate has the ability to put sentences together but with a number of errors in basic accuracy, idiom and use of verbs: *su padre hay …; su trabajo dependiente en … ; son muy claro; incredible.* There are inconsistencies of tense. The errors are mostly in basic contexts and he seems more assured in more demanding areas. Language improves as the candidate warms to the topic and gains confidence. He has an adequate range of structure and vocabulary and can deal with factual and more abstract matters. The balance of production, consistency and accuracy placed him in the middle band for Grid C1 (Quality of language).

Pronunciation and intonation are adequate and awarded 3 for Grid G. There are some mispronunciations (e.g. *oportiunidad, següir*, and some of the sounds are rather Anglicised: endings – ar, -d-, etc. Intonation suffers through hesitation and words tend to be pronounced separately rather than in authentic groupings.

Role play B: PlusBus (22)

The candidate asks her initial questions without ambiguity to establish the situation. In covering the main content points, insecurity of language can sometimes obscure some of the information, but for the most part communication is maintained. She takes the initiative by saying she has details of the scheme, which combines rail and bus travel. She points out the convenience of the scheme and gives details of the price, including the fact that you can travel around the town for a fixed price. She possibly misunderstands the question about where the scheme operates, but this is clarified in a follow-up question *("en más que doscientos pueblos")*. Prices *("la mayoría de precios de … una libra a dos libras")* and reductions for children *("pagan la mitad de precio")* are covered, though with linguistic ambiguity about the ages *("más que cinque")*. Different types of tickets are mentioned and she covers use of railcards and discounts offered. The examiner is told how to obtain further information, clearly stating that the phone number given is for bus times.

The candidate generally makes good use of the stimulus material and is awarded 12 for Grid A.

Although possibly a little nervous at times, she is quite forthcoming. She manages to maintain the momentum and extends her replies. The candidate is appropriately eager to do most of the talking, though there is sufficient interaction with the examiner to ensure the role play is more than just a summary exercise. She tries to keep control the exchange and shows some initiative *("Como no habla inglés, quiere que llame para usted?")*. The extension questions on attitudes to public transport are competently and quite thoughtfully handled.

For Grid B (Response to examiner), the candidate's general willingness to speak and the effectiveness of the communication puts her at 7 – "Responds readily … gives some well developed answers".

Language is enough to convey the message though the candidate's overall performance here does not quite equal her standard elsewhere. Although there is some attempt to use a respectable range of language there are some significant errors in idiom and syntax (*pida para*) and some coinings (*un billete single/ regreso*), semi-english *autobus*. There is a tendency to translate straight from English at times ("*público transporte*", etc. and inconsistency of accuracy. The mark for Grid C1 is 3.

Topic (23)

The chosen topic is family, from the Aspects of Daily Life AS topic area.

The candidate is reasonably well prepared with factual information and this enables her actually to discuss and develop issues arising from the topic. At AS level it is necessary to go beyond mere descriptions of the "typical" family and some of the changes: candidates should be prepared, as in the criteria for the mark scheme, to "develop and explain ideas… express points of view" and justify these with relevant factual information.

After a slightly generalised introduction, the candidate draws on a number of significant issues and brings in some appropriate supportive details, including some statistics, in support of the ideas she produces.

The information provided is relevant and deals with a number of different strands. The candidate's ideas and opinions are firmly tied to the information she provides. She matches the descriptor "able to develop and explain ideas… justification… relevant information" and has a mark of 8 for Grid D.

There is possibly evidence at times of a degree of over-preparation, in that the candidate can tend to give a series of mini statements. This is sometimes revealed by errors in pronunciation or stress, as if mentally reading a script. There is inevitably a compromise between careful preparation and spontaneity. However, the candidate responds to unexpected questions and the examiner takes care

to offer her the opportunity to do so. There is sufficient interaction and we are not here presented with a scripted exchange; rather the candidate seeks to use her material appropriately. The candidate is a little hesitant in places, but she regains her confidence quite quickly and she is always able to develop her answer.

She speaks with reasonable confidence for most of time, responds validly to the examiner's questions and keeps the momentum going. Her mark for Grid E1 (Fluency, spontaneity, responsiveness) is a borderline 8.

Language is good for the most part. There are some errors (see pronunciation) and minor inaccuracies but the candidate uses a good range of structures and tenses and some subjunctives and has appropriate vocabulary for the task. She is able to use concrete and discursive language and in sum matches the essential criteria under Grid C1 for 4 marks. (Language generally accurate… sound grasp of structures… some inconsistency).

Pronunciation and intonation are acceptable overall and the candidate is awarded 3 for Grid G. Some sounds are mispronounced, e.g. aspiration of h, as in *hacen; jijos*, *güerra, tradicionalamente* etc. Some vowels, particularly final o tend to be rather Anglicised (e.g. *cambiado*). More obtrusive are the mis-stressings: *déberes; anticoncéptivos, signífica*, etc. Intonation suffers when the candidate seems to quote from memory in places.

Generally a competent candidate but some unevenness in performance, particularly in Grids C1 and G, which would not be expected of the highest grade candidates.

Role play B: Spinnaker Tower (25)

The candidate successfully asks the initial questions to establish the situation and launches into an enthusiastic description of the tower. He does well to link the factual information and the positive qualities of the site to the advantages to the putative visitors and explain why it would be a good place to visit. He describes the views, the unique elements of the tower and the other attractions in the vicinity, clearly emphasising the attractive nature of the area. Other relevant information is given.

The candidate does most of the talking – which is of course what is expected – but a real role play is seen to develop, with a positive interchange and interaction between examiner and candidate. The examiner offers opportunities to clarify and to relate the replies to his needs in the client role and the candidate takes on board the interests and concerns of the visitor. The stimulus material is well exploited and nearly all the points are conveyed effectively sufficient for the performance under Grid A to reach the top band.

There is occasional hesitation and rephrasing, but candidate is forthcoming overall and his performance is encouraging. He is able to respond to the unexpected, for example, when asked what if the glass floor should break (*el vidrio es muy seguro*) and shows initiative and some imagination. Importantly, he makes an effort to carry out the task to persuade the examiner that the visit would be a good idea.

He copes quite well with the extension questions with some thoughtful ideas on the value of such attractions and visits to historical sites. He is placed at the borderline of the top band for Grid B.

There are some errors of language, for example *folleta*, confusion of *sesenta / setenta*, *cielo*, *torre/ torra*, *más que / de*, etc., but generally the candidate had a good grasp of idiom and a reasonable degree of accuracy.

He is able to extend his sentences and is reasonably confident in factual language and more discursive language, including that of persuasion. Not quite in the very top band, mainly through lack of consistency, he nevertheless scores a creditable 4.

Topic (25)

The candidate's topic deals with the changing nature of tourism in Spain (Leisure and Entertainment topic area) and the effects of tourism on the environment. He manages to avoid lengthy descriptions of tourist attractions and relevantly focuses on issues and ideas arising from the topic.

He declares a personal angle to the topic in his response to the examiner's initial question *¿Por qué escoges este tema?* by stating that, since he goes to Spain quite often, "los problemas con el turismo español me afectan" and goes on to develop these, including the role of drunken youths in tourist areas.

Although some of the information is somewhat generalised, an overuse of *muchos* perhaps, rather than being more specific in places, the candidate uses this information to concentrate on the essential problems or possible benefits for the environment, (*polución visual* as well as *polución del ruido*), economy or general wellbeing. He is able to show ideas, develop these reasonably effectively and give opinions at an appropriate level. For Grid D (Ideas, opinions, relevance), he has done just enough to show "relevant information to develop a range of ideas and justify points of view" and his mark is 9.

The candidate is forthcoming in his replies – there is occasional hesitation, mainly as he thinks through his responses, but he is generally spontaneous rather than speaking from a prepared script. A real discussion with the examiner ensues and there is the degree of interaction expected at higher bands. Although the examiner asks questions, the candidate is able to seize the point, develop this and include factual and discursive elements. Good momentum is maintained throughout and the candidate responds promptly and fully (Grid E1) and is given 9.

Language is generally sound and the candidate has a reasonable grasp of AS structures. He is accurate for the most part and avoids ambiguity. He has sufficient subject-specific vocabulary to deal with the topic, though he could have been a little more adventurous in range of structures, subjunctives, etc. He is awarded 4 for Grid C1.

Pronunciation is adequate. There are some errors of stress, e.g. in *minoría, masivo* and preterite endings *compro / compró, contruyo / construyó*. Some sounds are rather Anglicised – vowels, r, intervocalic consonants, and intonation could be improved. Communication is not impeded, however, and he is marked 3 for Grid G.

The candidate is clearly into the top grade for his overall performance in the test.