

Examiners' Report/
Principal Examiner Feedback

Summer 2013

GCSE Spanish (5SP02)
Paper 2A Speaking in Spanish

Edexcel and BTEC Qualifications

Edexcel and BTEC qualifications come from Pearson, the UK's largest awarding body. We provide a wide range of qualifications including academic, vocational, occupational and specific programmes for employers. For further information visit our qualifications websites at www.edexcel.com or www.btec.co.uk. Alternatively, you can get in touch with us using the details on our contact us page at www.edexcel.com/contactus.

Pearson: helping people progress, everywhere

Pearson aspires to be the world's leading learning company. Our aim is to help everyone progress in their lives through education. We believe in every kind of learning, for all kinds of people, wherever they are in the world. We've been involved in education for over 150 years, and by working across 70 countries, in 100 languages, we have built an international reputation for our commitment to high standards and raising achievement through innovation in education. Find out more about how we can help you and your students at: www.pearson.com/uk

Summer 2013

Publications Code UG036936

All the material in this publication is copyright

© Pearson Education Ltd 2013

GCSE Spanish

Paper 2 Speaking in Spanish

General Comments

The students had prepared well for the oral tests this summer and most of the Teacher Examiners conducted them in an encouraging and professional manner. There is a worrying trend, however, away from spontaneity and an increasing reliance on pre-learnt responses that follow a question and answer pattern rather than a natural conversation. Several Teacher Examiners are using a bank of questions rather than listening to what the student is saying and developing a natural conversation. In some cases exactly the same questions were asked of each student eliciting similar or identical responses. The most popular task type was once again the Presentation, followed by the Picture-Based Discussion with fewer students opting for the Open Interaction.

Presentations

Most of the Presentations focused on holidays or work experience, although students also chose to talk about school, free time or their favorite sports or pop star. Teacher Examiners have become far more conscious of the time element than in previous examination series and interrupt the Presentations at an appropriate point to allow time for the subsequent interaction. However, some centres need to be reminded that the Presentation must take at least one minute without interruption from the Teacher Examiner and a few students lost 2 marks for Content and Response if this did not happen.

It should be remembered that timing begins at the moment when a student produces the first utterance in the target language; introductions and administration by the Teacher Examiner do not count towards the timing. It is important to remember that if a Presentation lasts for the full three minutes or, as in some cases, exceeds the stipulated three minutes, one minute to make up the minimum four minutes for the test will almost certainly be insufficient for the student to demonstrate clearly the ability to interact in discussion with the Teacher Examiner.

Many of the Presentations were straightforward monologues, frequently pre-learnt and recited and some extended into the following conversation and discussion with pre-learnt responses to questions asked by the Teacher Examiner. Such lack of spontaneity will inevitably prevent students from accessing the higher marks for Content and Response where one of the descriptors rewards a student who 'Speaks very confidently **and with clear spontaneity**'. As happened last year, some students who recited their Presentation, sometimes at breakneck speed, suddenly ground to a halt in the subsequent discussion with the Teacher Examiner and demonstrated an inability to sustain a conversation. Disappointingly, students who used a prompt sheet and were unable to read fluently from it were severely

disadvantaged. It did not serve them well to mis-read and centres should be aware that it is immediately obvious when a student is reading from a script as unnatural pauses, intonation, strange emphases and mispronunciation, for instance of the Spanish 'y' or 'hay', leave little room for doubt. These general inconsistencies involved a significant loss of marks.

A good number of Teacher Examiners appeared to make use of a bank of questions which were repeated throughout the examination with all the students. Another descriptor in the assessment grid for Content and Response rewards students who show the ability to 'deal with unpredictable questions'. If all the students from the same centre are asked the same questions and produce similar or identical responses, it is difficult to find evidence for unpredictability. Many interactions were restricted to no other tense than the present and it is important that Teacher Examiners ask questions that will elicit responses in other tenses such as the future or the past so that the student can demonstrate an ability to manipulate verb forms and range over a variety of tenses or time frames. To access 5 or 6 marks for Range of Language, the descriptors in the assessment grid refer to **'Unambiguous use of different verb tenses'**.

Picture-based Discussions

These task types were also popular and favourite themes were Holidays, Mi Barrio and Sport. The pictures often led to a more relaxed discussion when questions such as ¿Quién es esta persona en la foto? encouraged students to talk about themselves or their friends and family without having a prepared response. There were some more adventurous students who brought pictures to prompt their thoughts on social problems such as drinking, smoking or drugs.

There was some good imaginative and original dialogue in many picture-based task types with students clearly enjoying the opportunity to talk about issues of personal interest. Students may wish to initiate the discussion on the picture they have brought to the test but there is no requirement for them to begin with a presentation and the Teacher Examiner could begin by asking the first question about the picture. Sometimes pronunciation became an issue with highly anglicized examples of the 'j', 'll' and 'q' consonants whilst less competent speakers had surprising difficulty with 'i', for example in the pronunciation of 'baiologee-a'. Other poorly performed pronunciation included the words 'que', 'eqipo', 'creo', 'llevar', 'de', 'me', 'ciudad' (cuidad), 'colegio', 'cine' and even 'playa'. Similarly there was regular confusion between 'fui' and 'fue'.

Most students could communicate ideas and opinions, some simple and predictable but others more sophisticated and complex, with very few becoming tongue-tied. Middle range students could improve their performance by attempting more subordination, connecting ideas with

subordinate clauses and using connectives such as 'además, 'así que', 'por lo tanto' or simply 'pero' instead of relying on three or four short sentences. Pictures do not have to be sent to the Moderator but centres should include on the CM2 form a description of the picture used by the students during the oral test.

Open Interactions

Once again, these were the least popular of the task types chosen by the students and several of them dealt with, for example, an interview between the student and the Teacher Examiner who played the role of a visiting Spanish teacher who wanted to record a discussion on the student's school or local area. Others focused on a discussion about work experience or an interview for a specific job. The Open Interactions were generally well conducted with the Teacher Examiner fully aware of the need for the student to ask questions and, if necessary, prompting the student in the course of the discussion with questions such as ¿Quieres hacerme una pregunta? Again, though, there were too many pre-learnt Open Interactions with little or no spontaneity.

Most centres are now aware that on the preparation stimulus it is important to instruct the students that they *may wish to* refer to the following rather than they *must* or *should* refer to the following as a preamble to the bullet points. If the students are given no option, the Moderator will check to ensure that all the bullet points have been covered and marks will be deducted for 'omission' which is one of the descriptors in the Content and Response assessment grid. By the same token, five or six bullet points at the most should be given to the student for preparation. If there are too many bullet points, little room is left for unpredictability. Similarly, students should be instructed 'You must ask questions during the test' as the marking principles across the languages allow for the deduction of marks if questions are not asked by the student. This only applies to Open Interaction tasks and there is no requirement for students to ask questions in either the Presentation or the Picture- based Discussion.

Marking of the Tests

Familiarity with these oral tasks means that many centres are now both accurate and consistent in their marking and ensure that standardisation takes place internally between different teachers. Some, however, often tend towards generosity for the weaker students or excessive harshness towards the more able. Moderators now provide full and detailed individual E9 reports to centres to explain any discrepancies and it is to be hoped that centres will act upon the advice given. As Moderators we see the work from a great number of centres and therefore any comments made are intended to ensure that all centres know exactly what is required for each mark band. For instance, a fully rehearsed examination with perfect sentence construction and tenses might allow a student to access high marks for Range of

Language but lack of intonation and poor pronunciation, which is often the case with rehearsed monologues, will affect the mark for Accuracy and also the mark for Content and Response. Some pre-learnt material will inevitably emerge during the discussion since students will have prepared the topic in advance, however examples of free-flowing natural dialogue need to be demonstrated in order to access the higher mark bands. Too often centres will reward students who are clearly struggling to remember rehearsed responses to known questions with marks more appropriately awarded to students who demonstrate greater confidence without undue hesitation. For a mark of 5 for Range of Language and Accuracy, students need to demonstrate significant competence in their ability to range over a variety of tenses and verb forms, to manipulate the language correctly and to show good pronunciation and intonation. Over use of the verb 'ir' for instance, using a variety of tenses – 'voy, 'fui', 'voy a ir' – would be marked at the lower end of an 'adequate' performance and the use of just 'me gusta' in the expression of opinions is unlikely to achieve more than half marks.

Administration

There was a significant increase this year in centres sending both Speaking and Writing coursework in the same batch to a single Moderator and this led to delay in the moderating process. Too many centres are sending all the students' work, including the unmoderated 2B tasks, instead of simply the samples required. However, nearly all centres correctly ensured that they sent the highest and lowest scoring students in addition to the requested samples when necessary.

Some centres sent nothing but Presentations or Picture-based Discussions in their sample of work to be moderated and it is important to remember that the Moderator needs to listen to a variety of representative task types and not just one. It is very helpful to have clearly labelled CD track listings detailing students' names and numbers. Several centres failed to include the students' CA2 preparation form with the 30 words and/or five drawings. In some cases it may well be that the students decided not to use these forms but it is important that the Moderator knows this and it should be indicated on the CM2 mark sheet.

Similarly, the stimulus for each submitted task type needs to be included with the work despatched and the correct form for completing the marked work is the CM2. Either the original picture or a description of the picture used by each student during the oral tests should also be sent. The move away from audio cassettes towards CDs and memory sticks seems almost complete and is a welcome step forward. Sometimes the recordings were faint and difficult to hear. It is essential that the microphone is positioned so as to favour the student and it is also important to check the audibility of the recordings before sending them to the Moderator. Finally, many centres are to be congratulated on administering the tests and submitting all the paperwork and recordings impeccably.

Grade Boundaries

Grade boundaries for this, and all other papers, can be found on the website on this link:

<http://www.edexcel.com/iwantto/Pages/grade-boundaries.aspx>

Pearson Education Limited. Registered company number 872828
with its registered office at Edinburgh Gate, Harlow, Essex CM20 2JE

Ofqual



Llywodraeth Cynulliad Cymru
Welsh Assembly Government

