



AS LEVEL SPANISH

7691/3T & V; Teacher / Visiting examiner conducted speaking test
Report on the Examination

7691
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General Comments

Given the disruption to many students' learning this year it was very pleasing to listen to some very good tests in which students showed a real progression from GCSE level and were able to demonstrate a good knowledge of the various sub-themes in the context of the Spanish-speaking world. It was clear to see that students had prepared well and were encouraged to demonstrate the full range of their linguistic ability.

Similarly, it was also good to see that many teacher-examiners had read feedback on previous years' examinations and acted upon advice given to ensure that this year's tests were well conducted. However, there were quite a number of poorly conducted tests that directly impacted on the student's ability to access the full range of marks available for the various AOs. Where this was the case, a *Teacher-Examiner Tester Performance Record* (TTPR) will have been sent to the centre with explicit guidance for the relevant teacher-examiner to ensure that they can amend the way that they conduct speaking tests for future series. Prior to conducting the tests, teacher-examiners are reminded of the importance of consulting the documents ***Instructions for the Conduct of the Exams*** and Paper 3 ***Report on the Examination***, both of which are updated each series and are available via Centre Services.

Administration

In most cases the administration of the tests was good, however one significant issue this year was that centres did not send the necessary paperwork to the AQA Examiner. It is essential that teacher-examiners refer to the *Instructions for the Conduct of the Exams* booklet and follow the instructions (page 14) regarding dispatch of the Attendance List and additional information (eg name of teacher-examiner conducting the tests, letters of cards given to each student etc). In addition, this booklet gives instructions regarding the correct labelling of audio files. Teacher-examiners should also make sure that they refer to the *Summary of Procedures* (page 21) to ensure that they are introducing each test correctly.

Teacher-examiners are reminded of the importance of positioning the microphone correctly and checking audibility levels, particularly in the case of quietly spoken students, as examiners can only mark what they hear. It is recommended that the microphone is positioned closer to the student than the teacher-examiner and that teacher-examiners avoid rustling papers whilst the student is speaking as this can prevent the student's responses being clearly heard. It is also essential that, if the teacher-examiner is using a telephone in the examination room as a timer or similar, it is put on airplane mode so as not to interfere with the recording as telephone connectivity can create static on a recording.

Teacher-examiners are reminded that they must follow the prescribed card sequence order.

As with previous series, Visiting Examiners reported that arrangements at centres were very good.

Conduct of the Test

Preparation Time

In the majority of cases it was evident that the students had made good use of the preparation time to prepare full responses to the three printed questions and prepare their own questions to ask the examiner. However, in some centres, the student's lack of familiarity with the three printed questions suggested that maybe they had not been given the stipulated 15 minutes preparation time. Centres should remind students that during the preparation time they can make detailed notes and use these throughout the discussion.

Timings

It is important to note that the timing of the test starts when the Teacher-examiner asks the first printed question on the first card chosen by the student and stops at 14 minutes. The timing is **not** paused for the transition between the first and the second card and so it is important that Teacher-examiners are aware of this and ensure that there is a smooth transition between the two cards. Each discussion of a sub-theme should last between 6 and 7 minutes and so Teacher-examiners need to ensure that they manage the time carefully. The student's card-related question needs to be asked before the 7 minute maximum for each card is reached and so best practice is to encourage the student to ask their question earlier in the discussion. It is important that Teacher-examiners are aware that questions posed after the 7 minute maximum for the relevant card will not be credited and this will clearly have an adverse effect on the score for AO2.

Student Performance

Assessment Objective 1 Understand and respond in speech to spoken language including face to face interaction.

Scores for this AO were generally good this year with many Teacher-examiners ensuring that they asked follow-up questions to enable students to develop their ideas and opinions. However, this year lots of Teacher-examiners allowed students to deliver lengthy responses to the three printed questions and did not ask sufficient unexpected questions, thus having an adverse effect on the score for AO1. In the worst cases, no questions beyond the three printed ones were asked, resulting in a score of 0 for AO1. Teacher-examiners are therefore reminded that in order for students to access the full range of marks available for AO1 there must be sufficient unpredictable elements. Best practice for Teacher-examiners is to ask follow-up questions in between the printed questions. In addition it is important that these questions are responsive to the student's answers as opposed to Teacher-examiners simply working through a list of pre-defined questions on the sub-theme in general. In some centres it was clearly the case that students were responding to very familiar questions and delivering pre-learnt responses; this had an adverse effect on their score for AO1: a genuine, spontaneous conversation is supposed to take place and so students should not be given prior knowledge of the questions that will be asked in the test itself. It is also in the student's best interests that the Teacher-examiner's unpredictable questions encourage them to develop their ideas and opinions rather than just seeking factual information.

Assessment Objective 2 Understand and respond in speech to written language drawn from a variety of sources.

Once again, the scores for this AO varied considerably and, unfortunately, in many cases incorrect preparation of students and the poor conduct of the test had a direct impact on the student's score for AO2. It is important that Teacher-examiners are aware that, in order to access the full range of marks available for AO2, as well as responding to the three printed questions and asking an appropriate question, students need to demonstrate that they have 'a very good understanding of the printed material', this means that students need to show that they have fully understood the **key messages** contained within the material on the card. In many centres students have clearly been taught to respond to the first printed question with a generic summary of the sub-theme and therefore their responses do not reflect a 'very good' understanding of the explicit material on the card.

In their preparation of students, Teacher-examiners are therefore encouraged to ensure that students, in their answer to the first printed question, are fully aware of the need to respond and react appropriately to the various key messages given in the printed material. Students must be discouraged from simply reading out the information verbatim. If it is that the student has not fully exploited the material on the card then Teacher-examiners should ask suitable follow-up questions that allow the student to demonstrate a full understanding. Teacher-examiners should avoid simply reading out the printed information on the card and asking students to comment and instead should ask the student a question such as '*¿Qué más nos dice la tarjeta sobre...?*' and allow the student to select and develop the relevant information from the card.

Teacher-examiners are also encouraged to challenge sensitively any misunderstanding or misinterpretation of the printed material on the part of the student.

Student's question (credited within the AO2 score)

Teacher-examiners are reminded that students need to pose a question within the 7 minute time limit for each card. To meet the requirement to ask a question, the student must seek information or opinion relevant to the sub-theme of the card. Asking for clarification or repetition will not meet the requirement. The student's question must contain a conjugated verb. Rephrasing or repetition of the printed questions or of a teacher-examiner's unpredictable question will not meet the requirement.

In this series the majority of students asked their question without being prompted and ensured that the question was appropriate, which was very pleasing. There were, however, many examples of questions having been asked after the 7 minute maximum time for the card and so Teacher-examiners are reminded that they should verbally prompt students to ask a question at a suitable time before the maximum time is reached. Best practice is to prompt the student earlier in the discussion so that there is time for the student to pose a second question if the first question does not meet the requirements outlined above. In cases where the first question does not meet the requirements, Teacher-examiners should prompt the student to ask a second question.

It is important that the Teacher-examiner's response to the student's question is as brief as possible, ideally just a few words, so as not to use valuable time for the students to demonstrate their knowledge and linguistic skills.

In cases where a question was not asked, was inappropriate, was asked after the maximum time for the card or could not be understood, the AO2 score was reduced by one mark.

Assessment Objective 3 Manipulate the language accurately, in spoken form, using a range of lexis and structure.

Performances in this AO varied considerably, with successful students demonstrating a sound knowledge of the basic tenses and using a good range of vocabulary and complex language, enabling them to access the full range of marks available. However, as with previous series, some students focused on trying to shoehorn in unnecessarily complex pre-learnt phrases at the cost of grammatical accuracy in simple structures and the conjugation of basic tenses; this had an adverse effect on their score for AO3. It was again evident that many students struggled with the verb '*sorprender*' as part of their response to the printed question '*Cómo reaccionas tú...?*'.

The most frequent grammatical errors were:

- Incorrect genders
- Lack of adjectival agreements
- Use of *me sorpresa* in the place of *me sorprende*
- Confusion of *fui* and *fue*
- Incorrect numbers: students struggled with various of the dates and figures given in the printed material
- Incorrect conjugation of basic past, present and future tenses
- Incorrect conjugation of *gustar*, *encantar*, *preocupar*, *interesar* and other impersonal verbs, especially in the third person forms.

Assessment Objective 4 Show knowledge and understanding of, and respond critically to different aspects of the culture and society of countries/communities where the language is spoken

Scores for this AO varied considerably, with many students failing to access the full range of marks available due to a lack of focus on target-language speaking countries or communities. In order to access the higher bands for this AO the students need to demonstrate a very good knowledge of the sub-theme *within the context of the Spanish-speaking world* and evaluate their evidence, offering a critical response and developing their arguments, justifying their points of view and drawing conclusions based on their understanding of the sub-theme within this context. Teacher-examiners therefore need to ensure that their unpredictable questions target the right kind of information; questions of a personal or general nature should be avoided and instead all questions should be worded in such a way as to elicit responses that include detailed reference to, and conclusions drawn in relation to practices, trends or attitudes in Spanish-speaking countries/communities.

Given the popularity once again of cards on the sub-theme of *El Ciberespacio*, it was surprising that many students had a limited knowledge of technology related issues in Hispanic communities.

As with previous series, it is worth noting that many students cited General Franco and the *Guía de la buena esposa* as being responsible for all modern-day problems in Spain (and indeed in many Latin American countries), and indiscriminate reference to this period of Spanish history had an adverse effect on the score for AO4. It would be in the best interests of the students to have knowledge of some more relevant, current political figures, policies, campaigns or similar information to use as justification for their opinions.

Stimulus cards

Tarjeta A: *Los viejeniales: la nueva tribú española*

This card was not a popular choice and, whilst those who chose it seemed to have understood the gist of the printed material, their responses often reflected a lack of understanding of details such as who they '*viejenials*' are and that many of them actively travel, use social media and enjoy a variety of experiences. Subsequent discussions tended to stray onto the sub-theme of social media. Successful students were able to discuss how the role of over 55s has changed in Spain in recent years, drawing upon their knowledge of the changes in the Spanish labour market, the roles of grandparent and family trends to give detailed responses.

Tarjeta B: *La elección de no ser madre*

This was quite a popular card. Most students demonstrated a good level of understanding of the information conveyed in the first two lines but many overlooked the information in the final paragraph, struggling with '*la gente las mira con pena*' and that those who choose not to have children have a fulfilling life. Most students, however, were able to discuss the changes in the concept of family in the Spanish speaking world in recent years and often accurately cited changes in laws regarding, for example, same sex marriage, divorce and abortion in various Spanish-speaking countries to support their arguments.

Tarjeta C: *La app ¿Tienes sal?: una nueva forma de estar en contacto con tus vecinos*

This card was chosen less frequently and, whilst most students clearly understood the first and third paragraphs, the information in the second paragraph regarding how the app is used to share useful information was often overlooked. Successful students made good use of relevant evidence and statistics related to technology and its use in the Spanish-speaking world that they used to support their arguments. Less successful students chose to give generic information regarding cyberbullying, addiction and identity theft without any reference to the Hispanic world, thus impacting their score for AO4.

Tarjeta D: *Adictos a las pantallas en Argentina*

A relatively popular card, performances varied considerably. Less successful students failed to acknowledge that the printed information was focused on Argentina, suggesting instead that this was a Spanish issue, and only really discussed the issue of addiction to technology. However, successful students were able to react to the recommendation to limit screen use to two hours per day and discuss the objectives of the '*Plan Nacional contra las Adicciones*'. As is often the case with cards on *El Ciberespacio*, students who chose this card often gave every generic responses which impacted their score for AO4.

Tarjeta E: *Los juguetes sexistas*

A relatively popular card and most students were able to respond well to the second and third printed questions, referencing appropriate evidence from the Hispanic world to support their arguments. Many students spoke about the '*techo de cristal*' that still exists in the world of work but highlighted the fact that women are more prominent in politics nowadays, particularly in the governments of Cuba, Nicaragua, Mexico and Spain, and that the paternity rules have changed in Spain. However, in lots of tests, unless prompted by Teacher-examiners in their follow-up questions, the students overlooked the key messages regarding the target audience of the

campaign and the impact that Christmas adverts have on promoting this inequality. General Franco was the main reason given for the existence of '*machismo*' throughout the Spanish-speaking world; it would be in the best interests of the students to have knowledge of some more relevant, current political figures, laws, policies, statistics or similar information to use as justification for their opinions.

Tarjeta F: *Muere la primera fotoperiodista de España*

This was a relatively popular card and the vast majority of students demonstrated a good understanding of most of the key messages. However, many failed to take note of the title and so spoke as if Joana Biarnés were still alive and working. In their response to the second and third printed questions students made reference to things such as prejudice in the labour market, *el techo de cristal*, *el Día internacional de las mujeres* and campaigns such as *Ni una menos* to support their arguments. Well known figures in politics, music, film and business including Michelle Bachelet, Shakira, Salma Hayek and the late Rosalía Mera were often referenced as trailblazers of feminism in the Hispanic world.

Tarjeta G: *Las vacaciones de los famosos*

Another relatively popular card but performances were varied. Successful students were able to demonstrate that they understood that the celebrities were choosing to spend their holidays helping others but that, in spite of this, only around 30% of Spaniards would like to work as volunteers. Many students felt that the only reason celebrities help others is to raise their own profile but some felt that football players such as Casillas, Mata, Messi and Navas, had a genuine desire to help those desperately in need. Some students overlooked the '*¿Por qué?...*' at the beginning of the second printed question and so this resulted in similar responses to both the second and third printed questions. Shakira, Salma Hayek, Juanes and Ricky Martin were frequently cited as Hispanic idols who are a good example and rappers such as Bad Bunny were mentioned as bad role models. It is worth reminding students that, despite having Hispanic heritage, celebrities such as Jennifer Lopez, Selena Gomez and Eva Longoria should not be referenced given that they are American.

Tarjeta H: *La lucha contra el SIDA*

This was not a popular card but those students who chose it generally demonstrated a very good understanding of all of the key messages and were able to give their personal reaction to the work that Miguel Bosé did to support the fight against AIDS. All students felt that famous people should do something to help charitable causes and commonly felt that footballer Lionel Messi had been a bad example to young people due to his tax evasion scandal and that rappers such as Bad Bunny were also poor role models due to the sexist nature of their lyrics.

Tarjeta I: *El cantante Serrat no quiso cantar en catalán*

This card was not a popular choice and many students struggled to demonstrate a very good understanding of the key messages, in the main due to misinterpreting the printed material and therefore not being able to express the fact that, whilst Serrat is proud of his Catalan roots, he had chosen not to sing in Catalan. Successful students were able to discuss the historical ban of regional languages under the Franco regime, the importance regional languages play in modern Spanish society and the use of regional languages in educational settings in autonomous communities. Bullfighting and Catalan Independence were the main examples of polemic issues in Spanish regional identity.

Tarjeta J: *La Navidad en las diferentes regiones de España*

This was a popular card and most students were able to respond to the fact that there are different Christmas traditions throughout Spain. However, whilst understanding the overall message, many students didn't demonstrate any real understanding of the finer detail of the printed material. Students generally spoke favourably about the way in which Spaniards celebrate their different regional festivals and were keen to attend some and, as ever, *La Tomatina* and *San Fermín* proved to be the festivals of choice amongst the students. It was good to hear some students discussing more original selections such as the *Feria de Abril* and the *Sant Jordi* celebrations in Cataluña. In their response to the third printed question, students tended to focus on traditions rather than gastronomy, but dishes such as paella and gazpacho were referenced by some students. Teacher-examiners are reminded that the sub-theme *La identidad nacional en España* is the only sub-theme in which the discussion must remain within the realm of Spain as opposed to any Spanish-speaking country/community; students must be discouraged from discussing material related to the latter (such as *El Día de los Muertos*, which was frequently cited in responses to this card).

Tarjeta K: *Los patios de Córdoba*

This was another popular card and successful students were able to appreciate the significance of the UNESCO recognition of this festival and the fact that the festival allows people to visit private patios for free as well as enjoying the many Andalusian music and dance events organised during this period. Less successful students struggled with the concept of '*los patios*' and the information regarding '*visitas de forma gratuita*'. It was felt that teaching young people about their cultural heritage was very important and, predictably, the most popular cultural heritage sites amongst the students were Machu Picchu, *la Sagrada Familia* and the Alhambra, with many keen to visit all or some of them.

Tarjeta L: *Teotihuacán, zona arqueológica de la época maya*

This card was relatively popular but performances varied considerably. Less successful students simply read the printed information verbatim and spoke of Teotihuacán as if it were still a functioning city and that they were surprised that its population had risen so much. Successful students, however, were able to react to the significance of this archaeological site and its importance in the cultural heritage of Mexico. In their responses to the second printed question, students noted the economic benefits that cultural heritage sites bring to an area and often referenced the limits on visitors that have been put in place in Machu Picchu to protect it for future generations.

Mark Ranges and Award of Grades

Grade boundaries and cumulative percentage grades are available on the [Results Statistics](#) page of the AQA Website.