
AS

SPANISH

Paper 3 Speaking
Report on the Examination

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General comments

This was the first examination on the new specification so it was pleasing to find that many students were well prepared for the new speaking tests and many teacher-examiners conducted the test very well. The majority had a very sympathetic examining style and encouraged their students to develop answers and justify opinions. Most listened to the students' responses and followed up on them. There were few instances of teacher-examiners working through a set list of questions, the answers to which the students had memorised. This is a welcome development and teachers are to be congratulated for embracing the spirit of the new examination. There were some excellent conversations from students who had clearly enjoyed the topics studied in class and had spent time researching them. While most students did not stray too far from their text books when asked to provide examples of artists, places of interest to tourists, celebrity role models etc, a number had clearly done their own investigation into these, which made for some very interesting discussions.

Administration

Given that there were some significant changes in the administration of the test, it was pleasing to note that in the vast majority of cases the administration was very good with materials that were well presented and carefully packaged. There were, however, some issues with missing attendance lists and unlabelled or incorrectly labelled media. Schools are reminded to take great care over the administration of the speaking test to ensure that the process can run as smoothly as possible. In particular, it is important that the name of the teacher-examiner(s) conducting the tests is included on the label accompanying the recordings. Detailed information on these matters together with the conduct of the test can be found in the *Instructions for the Conduct of the Examinations* booklet available on e-AQA. Visiting examiners reported that the arrangements at centres were very good and there were no significant issues with regard to the change in procedures regarding preparation time or the role of the invigilators.

Conduct of the test **Preparation Time**

Students clearly understood the need to choose one stimulus card from each of the themes provided. However, it was apparent to visiting examiners in particular that many students had not made effective use of the preparation time to prepare responses to the three printed questions for each card, which inevitably impacted on their performance in the test itself. Teachers are encouraged to ensure that students have plenty of opportunity to practise preparing effectively under timed conditions.

Card sequence

In centres conducting their own tests, the prescribed sequence of cards was generally observed, but it would be helpful to markers if in future a list of the running order was sent together with the recordings.

Timings

Prescribed timings were adhered to by the vast majority of centres, with very few exceeding the 7 minute maximum or not reaching the 6 minute minimum. Centres are reminded that timing begins when the first printed question is asked. It is a requirement that the candidate ask one card-related

question during the test and it is important that this question is posed within the 7 minutes allocated for each discussion: questions that are asked after the 7 or 14 minute limit cannot be credited. It is also not possible to credit a 'catch-up' question for the first discussion that is asked during the second discussion. It is important for teacher-examiners to remember that their response to the candidate's question should be brief so as to not take up valuable examination time.

Student performance

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

Scores for this AO were variable, although the vast majority scored between 3 and 5 marks. Students performed well when teacher-examiners had followed up their responses to the printed material and used supplementary questions giving them sufficient opportunity to respond to unpredictable elements. In order to access the higher marks, students are reminded that they need to develop their ideas and opinions.

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

The performance in this AO varied considerably. Students who had made effective use of the preparation time and were able to demonstrate their full understanding of all of the material on the card, fared well in this section. Many students, however, failed to understand the importance of fully exploiting the material on the card in their responses. Students should be encouraged to interpret information on the card rather than just reading it out. In addition, teacher-examiners should note that it is in the best interests of the candidate to ask follow up questions between the printed questions to ensure that students have the opportunity to show a full understanding of the material and to go beyond their prepared responses to show a deeper understanding of the content of the card. In addition, if a student has clearly misunderstood or misinterpreted information on the card, the teacher-examiner should try and guide them, in a sympathetic way, to rethink the misinterpretation or misunderstanding.

Most students effectively fulfilled the requirement of asking a question of the examiner. Students are reminded that the question should arise from the material on the card and should elicit an opinion or information. Questions such as *¿Estás de acuerdo conmigo?* or *¿Compartes mi opinión?* were used but often it was not clear which particular statement the student was referring to. Teacher-examiners are reminded of the need to prompt the student to ask a question before the 7 minutes allocated to each card are complete. In cases where questions were not asked or were not understood, the score for AO2 was reduced by one mark.

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

Many students demonstrated a sound knowledge of the basic tenses and used a good range of vocabulary and complex language enabling them to access the full range of marks available. Pronunciation was generally good and rarely had a significant impact on comprehension. It was noticeable, however, that some students were less familiar with the more abstract language that is needed to respond critically to the aspects of culture and society studied.

The most frequent errors were:

- Confusion of *ser* and *estar*
- Incorrect conjugation of radical changing verbs
- Incorrect conjugation of *gustar* and other impersonal verbs
- Incorrect gender (eg *la problema* / *la sistema* / *los mujeres*)
- Lack of adjectival agreements
- Use of pronouns
- *Es vale la pena.*

Confusion of words this year included:

- *pintadas* / *pinturas*
- *vistas* / *opiniones*
- *dependiente* / *depende*
- *más bueno* / *mejor*
- *peligro* / *peligroso*

Use of the subjunctive was in evidence but in most cases only in set phrases such as *es importante que...* or *no creo / pienso que...*

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

In general students struggled to access the full range of marks available for this aspect of the test. In many cases this was due to a superficial knowledge of the sub-theme in the context of a Spanish-speaking community and an inability to draw conclusions based on this knowledge. However, in many cases it was due to the general and/or personal nature of the unpredicted questions asked by teacher-examiners. It is essential that unpredicted questions are 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 communities.

Stimulus Cards

Terjeta A: La Primera Comuni3n

Very few students chose this card. Of those who did, only a few demonstrated real knowledge of the significance of first communion, some believing that it was something to do with marriage. Most, however, had plenty of ideas about the church's role in Spanish society both at present and in the past. Those students who performed well recognised and responded to the focus on the celebration having become too materialistic and were also able to discuss the religious origin of the majority of the Hispanic festivals that they had studied.

Tarjeta B: La actitud hacia el matrimonio en Espa1a

This card was quite popular but students tended to focus on the fall in the number of marriages and did not refer to the later age at which Spanish couples now marry or reasons why Spanish women might marry at 29. Several did recognise the significance of 1976 and were able to discuss the situation in Spain under the Franco regime compared to the current day. Many students were able to discuss the legal changes in Hispanic countries regarding both same sex marriages and divorce.

Tarjeta C: Internet en Latinoamérica

This was a popular card and was generally understood, but answers to Question 1 were quite superficial and revealed a lack of appropriate language, especially numbers. Students did not often address the difference in download speeds between the various Latin American countries or reasons why this might exist, and they lacked detailed knowledge of internet usage in the Hispanic world. Pronunciation of the names of countries was sometimes poor.

Tarjeta D: El uso irresponsable de Internet

This was another popular card. Those students who fared well fully exploited the material on the card, responding to all of the statistics given. However, in many cases students tended to focus on only one of the statistics. The fourth statistic was generally ignored, perhaps because students were unfamiliar with the expression *quedar con*. Those students who completed the task well recognised the importance of focusing on irresponsible use of the internet by young Spanish people and demonstrated a detailed knowledge of internet usage in a variety of Spanish-speaking countries, particularly Spain and Mexico.

Tarjeta E: Día internacional de la lucha contra la homofobia y la transfobia

This was quite a popular card and stronger students were able to discuss the changes in the law in various Hispanic countries with regards to legalisation of gay marriages and the right for same sex couples to adopt children, including countries where these are still not permitted. Reference was made to the Catholic church's influence. Less able students struggled to explain exactly what messages the *Besatón* was communicating and why some would consider it *un escándalo*.

Tarjeta F: La igualdad de los sexos en los países hispánicos

This was quite a popular choice, but many students were confused by the information in the box and paid insufficient attention to the information below, which it was hoped would form the basis of their responses to Question 1. Several students confused Paraguay and Nicaragua, something which was not always followed up by teacher-examiners. References were made to the *brecha salarial* in Spain and other inequalities in the work place. Only the strongest students were able to offer suggestions of when inequality favours women rather than men, with differences in maternity and paternity leave being the most common example given.

Tarjeta G: Lionel Messi, futbolista de gran talento y activista humanitario

This was one of the most popular cards and most students made good use of the material on the card, together with their own knowledge of Messi and other footballers. Luis Suárez was often cited as a poor role model. Shakira and Salma Hayek were popular choices as examples of Hispanic people who the students admired due to their charity work. Less able students simply focused on Messi's work with his foundation and did not make reference to his talent as a footballer, his earnings or his failure to pay taxes and subsequent prison sentence.

Tarjeta H: Frida Kahlo

This was also quite a popular card and students were able to make some good use of the information on the card, although some only made reference to a few of the statements, mainly those to do with her sexuality and accident. Some students were familiar with her paintings and her marriage to Diego Rivera and the impact of both her marriage and accident on her self-portraits. Shakira, Lionel Messi and Salma Hayek were once again popular choices as examples of inspirational Hispanic people.

Tarjeta I: La gastronomía valenciana

This was a popular card but often students failed to acknowledge the importance of the community in this celebration. Few students fully addressed the importance of food and drink in the social life

of Spaniards, focusing more on what foods were enjoyed by tourists. Some students gave good answers to Question 3, referring to the influence of Arabic culture and the relationship between the geographical location and climate on Spanish cuisine. Other answers tended to be superficial and the social importance of such fiestas was underestimated. Teacher-examiners are reminded that the sub-theme of this card is *La identidad regional en España* and so students' responses should focus on Spain rather than other Hispanic countries.

Tarjeta J: Las fiestas de San Fermín en Pamplona

This was a very popular card with predictable responses: it is dangerous and should be banned, and that it is cruel to the bulls. The sentence regarding the American President wanting to attend was largely ignored. Question 3 elicited references to machismo, madness, adrenalin rush and tradition. Most students were familiar with the *encierro* element of the fiesta but were not aware of any other aspects of this fiesta. The Tomatina, Fallas and Semana Santa were popular choices for Hispanic festivals that interested the students. Pronunciation of the word *hospitalizadas* often caused issues for students. Again, teacher-examiners are reminded that the sub-theme of this card is *La identidad regional en España* and so therefore students' responses should focus on Spain rather than other Hispanic countries.

Tarjeta K: ¿Traen los edificios icónicos fama y dinero?

This was a very popular card, particular with those students who had previously visited Barcelona and so were familiar with the Sagrada Familia and other works by Gaudí. Many students were able to discuss the importance of the building for tourism in Barcelona but not Gaudí's style and how nature influenced his work. The most popular iconic buildings that students would like to visit in the Hispanic world are the Alhambra, La Mezquita and Machu Picchu.

Tarjeta L: La música en el mundo hispánico

This card was less popular and, whilst students talked knowledgeably about the mariachi bands, they generally ignored the *flautas de caña*, something which was not always followed up by teacher-examiners. Knowledge of different sorts of music in the Hispanic world was thin, with mention of *reggaetón* or flamenco in Spain, salsa in Latin countries and rappers such as Daddy Yankee and Pit Bull who use a mixture of Spanish and English and were considered poor role models.

Use of statistics

Statistics used in this report may be taken from incomplete processing data. However, this data still gives a true account on how students have performed for each question.

Mark Ranges and Award of Grades

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