

Examiner: Hello. Come in. Take a seat.
This is the Speaking Test of the International English Language Testing System taking place on Saturday 29th September at Didtown Centre, Centre number DD783. The candidate is Xavier Manuel Rico and the candidate number is 0004290. The examiner is Carol Kennedy, examiner number 433816.
Good morning, my name is Carol Kennedy. Can you please tell me your full name?

Candidate: Yes, I'm Xavier Manuel Rico.

Examiner: And what should I call you?

Candidate: You can call me Xavi.

Examiner: Can I see your identification please, Xavi?

Examiner: Thank you. Thank you.

Part 1 (01:14 to 05:57)

Examiner: Right, in the first part of the interview, I'm going to ask you some questions about yourself. So let's talk about what you do. Do you work, or study?

Candidate: I'm still studying ... in my final year. I've nearly finished my career ... my course.

Examiner: And what are you studying? And do you enjoy it?

Candidate: I'm studying law and yes, I do enjoy it, most aspects of it. But, in this final year there is a lot of hard work and a lot of reading, and I cannot say that I enjoy all of this reading. But, um, what I really enjoy is working on case studies. What I mean is discussing cases, um, I like to exchange ideas with people.

Examiner: So what are your future plans?

Candidate: I want to have a career in law, um, but I have to decide which area to specialize in first, and then maybe study for another four or five years. Um, I hope to specialize in environmental law, which is the law that businesses use to ... have to abide by to ensure that their practices do not affect the environment.

Examiner: Let's talk about friendships. How do you spend time with your friends?

Candidate: Like most other people, I think ... having a drink or a meal. I play *football sala* with some old friends. I think it's called five-a-side in ... in this country. There are sometimes six or seven of us ... I haven't been able to ... to keep it up, so I'm looking forward to ... to getting back into it.

Examiner: And is there one person you could call your best friend?

Candidate: I would say maybe my girlfriend is my best friend, um, although if you ask her, maybe she doesn't say, um, say this. But among my male friends, I do not think I have a friend who is closer than all the others. Um, in Spain, we tend to have a big group of friends. On the weekend, maybe a Friday or a Saturday, we will all go out together, um, sometimes classmates from school or university, and a big group of guys and girls, fifteen to twenty of us will go out and have a meal or end up in a club or a bar and seeing some music.

Examiner: And can you tell me about a friend you remember from your childhood?

Candidate: That's going back a long time. There is a boy that I don't know now, but was a very good childhood friend of mine, was called Hector. Um, we were about around nine or ten years old and we did everything together. Um, he was kind of geeky, I guess. I had other friends that I had similar interests with and I did sport with but, I liked Hector

because he was very different. He used to play with chemistry sets and fix engines, and things like this. But then we went on to different secondary schools and we made new friends and we grew apart, um, which was a shame.

Examiner: Now let's move on to talk about culture. Tell me about something that you feel is special to the culture in your country. I mean, it could be the food, or maybe the music or perhaps art and literature.

Candidate: I could talk about any of these things but, er, give me a moment ... I think it is better that I talk about food. I'm very proud of Spanish art and literature but I think that I know most about food. You could say I'm a food expert.

Actually, I think Spanish food could be more recognized. I mean, everybody knows dishes like *tortilla* and *paella*, and there are *tapas* restaurants in every city, but our cuisine is more sophisticated than that. And, when everybody comes to Spain they think that we only ever eat snacks, and when you go for a meal there are loads of dishes on one table...um, but, there are some very good *tapas* restaurants but most of them are ... how do you say? ... um, specialized, no specialized, um, standardized ... um, because they make the food so that everybody will like it. It's like Italian food or Chinese food.

Examiner: So is there a traditional dish that is associated with your country?

Candidate: I'd say that there are not one traditional dish, but there are many regional dishes that are famous. For example, *paradilla* is very famous in coastal areas, which is grilled seafood, and everyone will have every kind of fish you can imagine. Um, but if you're in the mountains you will eat food that is from the mountains ... maybe a deer or goat or things like this. But, don't think that Spanish food is necessarily just about traditional dishes. Like I say, the best restaurants are the most adventurous.

Examiner: Thank you.

Part 2 (05:58 to 10:07)

Examiner: Now, I'm going to give you a topic, and I'd like you to talk about it for one to two minutes. You have one minute to plan what you're going to say and you can make notes if you wish. Do you understand?

Candidate: Yes.

Examiner: So, there's your paper and pencil ... and ... this is your topic. So, I'd like you to describe an event that you attended recently.

OK. Now you have one to two minutes for this, so don't worry if I stop you, I'll tell you when the time's up. Could you please start speaking ... now?

Candidate: I'm going to talk about my grandparents' golden wedding anniversary, which was two months ago. They're in their seventies now, and have been married for 50 years, so it was a very special day. I have been to many kinds of anniversaries and parties and weddings, but I must say that I enjoyed this day more than any other. It was a moving and memorable day. I think that the combination of the importance of the day and the fantastic atmosphere was ... was what made it so special.

This anniversary was ... was in a country house, which in Spain we call *una finca*, which is like an old ranch. There were many guests who came from far and wide. This venue was perfect because there was a courtyard and a big garden and a magnificent hall where we could have the evening meal. My girlfriend and my brother's girlfriend came together with us. As soon as we arrived with everybody there, my mother, she saw everybody and started to cry. I can tell you that my mother, she cries very easily, and there were plenty more tears on the day. There were musicians playing in the courtyard, like an orchestra with just four people, and everybody had a glass of champagne.

Now, perhaps the most important thing of this day was the people that I saw there. I saw many uncles and aunts that I had not seen for many years, and many cousins that I had not seen since I was a boy. My mother's brother came from Canada and one of my grandfather's sisters came from Australia. It was very emotional and it was wonderful to see my grandparents this happy.

The best moment for me was when my grandfather made his speech. He thanked my grandmother for sticking with him all these years and it was not only my mother crying at this point, I can assure you. He's a very good speaker and he made everybody laugh as well and finally, of course, they cut the cake and everybody came together for the group photo and ...

Examiner: Thank you. So, what time did you get to bed that night?

Candidate: I think we were, um, some of the last to leave at around 2 a.m.

Examiner: Thank you, can I have the booklet, the pencil and the paper. Thank you.

Part 3 (10:08 to 14:30)

Examiner: Now, you've been telling me about an important event in the past that you attended. Now in the final five minutes of this test I'd like to ask you some more *general* questions that are related to this.

Let's talk about past events in general. Do you think photographs are the best way to record and remember special events in our lives?

Candidate: That's a really good question, and I mean of course photos are part of our lives now in a way that was not possible in other eras. I read the other day that more photos are taken now than ever before, and I mean millions or maybe billions of photos every day – it's as if we have to take a photo to prove that something happened! I can understand that, I mean, I think that people want to remember special events and even everyday things too. And personally I love taking photos when I go places and see my friends. And I also love looking at old photos – I think they can provide an insight into the past as well.

Examiner: Why do you think that?

Candidate: I think that they can be very powerful and remind us of special places and people and even remind us what we were doing this day or how we can be feeling in this moment. They are also a record of our lives, visually, and for example photos of you as a baby, and then as a child. I think it's an incredible thing, like a diary. I think it can act as a trigger for memory as well.

Examiner: What about written records? Can they also encourage us to remember past events?

Candidate: Written records? By written records do you mean writing things down – like diaries or letters?

Examiner: Yes.

Candidate: Well, yes – I think that writing things down can definitely help us to remember the past but also the reality is that people no longer write things down in the same way – like long letters or diaries. Some people do but I think that we have less time and patience nowadays, and writing is more of a luxury, I suppose. In fact, I cannot remember the last time that I put pen to paper – apart from this exam! I think I can just about stretch to a postcard. However, my mum tells me that she kept a daily diary, um, throughout her childhood, recording everything that she did. She wrote lots and lots during the school holidays especially and I like the idea of doing that but I know that I would never get around to actually sitting down and putting my thoughts on a page.

Examiner: And which do you think is better – recording important moments by taking photographs, or by writing them down?

Candidate: Well, I'm not sure that I can come down on one side or the other. Though on balance, I would say that visual image is more powerful. Um, I'm trying to think of a good example here – there are so many famous photos that capture a moment in time, but one particular photo stands out for me is the image of the wall coming down in Berlin, in Germany in 1989. When you look at the photo, you can imagine the place and the time and the moment very, very clearly. And I think it's amazing that one image can do that.

Examiner: Some people think that it's more important to be concerned about events in the future than events in the past. What do you think?

Candidate: I'm not sure that I can agree with that because I do not believe we can make sense of the future unless we understand what happened in the past.

Examiner: Why do you say that?

Candidate: Well, in Spain we are very proud of our culture and identity and I'm sure that is true for many people across the world. Maybe that's why so many people spend a lot of time researching back into their family history. I know that from travelling around to other countries like the UK, how important history is and how important celebrating the past is. It enables people to understand where they came from and where they are going. So, in that sense, the past and the future are linked. Um, so, we cannot forget the past even if we do want to concentrate on the future.

Examiner: Thank you very much. That's the end of the speaking test.

Candidate: Thank you.