

2000 HSC Notes from the Examination Centre Spanish

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GPO Box 5300
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Tel: (02) 9367 8111

Fax: (02) 9262 6270

Internet: <http://www.boardofstudies.nsw.edu.au>

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Spanish

2 Unit Z

Listening Skills (30 marks)

General Comments

Candidates responded well overall and demonstrated a good level of understanding of spoken Spanish. Most items requiring a more detailed response were answered in sufficient detail with candidates being guided by the amount of space provided.

Candidates responded well to the wide range of topics and answered the majority of questions with a sound level of accuracy.

Specific Comments

Item 2

Part (b) – The answer was ‘white, dark green and navy blue’. While the majority of candidates furnished all details, many simply wrote ‘white, green and blue’. This does not answer the question fully. Candidates must remember to include all details in their response.

Part (c) – The answer was ‘at the back/rear/end/bottom, on the right’. Most candidates answered correctly although some understood *al fondo* as meaning ‘straight ahead’, whilst others did not answer the question fully. Candidates must remember to include all details in their response.

Item 3

Most candidates selected a wide range of relevant points from the information provided. However, some candidates gave insufficient detail.

Item 4

Most candidates could identify at least two features found in Valencia’s main gardens, although some candidates wrote simply ‘fountains’ instead of ‘old fountains’, or ‘statues’ instead of ‘marble statues’. Candidates must remember to include all details in their response. Also, some candidates understood *antiguo* to mean ‘antique’ instead of ‘old’.

Item 5

Part (b) – A number of candidates did not fully answer this question. They were required to state ‘a seat in the non-smoking section’.

Item 7

Part (a) – Most candidates answered this part well, although some did not know what *un perro* was.

Part (b) – This part was generally done well, although some candidates understood *Y no tiene cola* as meaning that “the dog had no collar”.

Item 8

This item was generally done well, although some candidates focused on the word *fresas* and gave their answer as B, instead of listening to the cue *tarta* and *pagar*. Candidates are reminded that in multiple-choice items, they should listen to a situation in its entirety before making their choice.

Item 9

Part (b) – This part was generally done well, although some candidates were unfamiliar with the Spanish alphabet.

Item 10

This item proved challenging for the candidates.

Part (b) – Candidates found it difficult to indicate the location of the computer and printer on the diagram. Candidates are reminded to spend time familiarising themselves with the question as it is read out and listen carefully to the item before making a decision.

Item 11

Part (b) – This part was generally done well, although some candidates did not write *pesetas* in their answer. Candidates are reminded to include the correct monetary unit mentioned.

Item 13

Part (a) – Most candidates did not provide sufficient detail in their answer, giving only ‘art’ or ‘drawing’ or ‘painting’ as their answer. The correct answer was ‘drawing and painting’. Others did not recognise *dibijo y pintura*.

Part (b) – Most candidates did not answer this well. Some wrote ‘creative’ as their answer instead of ‘it enables him to be creative / it is creative’. Others understood ‘professional’ but did not link it to ‘he wants to be a professional painter’. Candidates are reminded to listen carefully to each item and provide all necessary detail.

Item 17

Part (b) – Some candidates did not understand the distance given.

Item 19

Part (b) – Most candidates did not supply sufficient detail in this response. The correct answer was ‘(i) grandparents are coming for dinner tonight’, not ‘(ii) she has to be home at 6:30pm’.

Item 20

Part (b) – Most candidates did not supply sufficient detail in this response. Candidates are reminded that the number of lines provided on the paper is an indication of the amount of detail required.

Speaking Skills (20 marks)

Section I – Oral Reading (5 marks)

General Comments

Many candidates found the text challenging.

As in previous years, the reading of some candidates was disjointed. Some candidates read words as isolated and unrelated elements rather than as part of a sentence. This inappropriate phrasing hindered effective communication. Candidates are advised to use their preparation time well and scan the passage in order to identify related linguistic elements: noun-adjective, verb-adverb; article-noun; so they do not split elements, which are dependent on one another.

Candidates should also remember that punctuation such as accents, commas and full stops are subject to certain conventions such as inflection and intonation and that these must be implemented if effective communication is to occur.

Specific Comments

A number of candidates had difficulty with the following:

<i>sueño</i>	became	<i>sueno</i>
<i>película</i>	became	<i>pelicúla</i>
<i>sigue</i>	became	<i>sigwe</i>
<i>rincón</i>	became	<i>rinsón</i>
<i>lejano</i>	became	<i>léggiano</i> (with Italian pronunciation)
<i>vez</i>	became	<i>vez</i> (with an English 'z')
<i>escenas</i>	became	<i>eskenas</i>
<i>puñetazos</i>	became	<i>punetazos</i>
<i>botellazos</i>	became	<i>botelazos</i>
<i>persecuciones</i>	became	<i>persecusions</i> (with an English pronunciation)
<i>formidable</i>	became	<i>formidable</i> (with French or English pronunciation)
<i>refinería</i>	became	<i>refinéria</i>
<i>petróleo</i>	became	<i>petroléo</i>

Section II – Speaking (15 marks)

General Comments

Candidates performed well overall. Those who found words or phrases challenging, attempted to use other methods to convey the essence of the message.

Situation 1 – Ringing a friend

This situation was done well. However, candidates must read cues carefully to ensure a correct response. Some candidates gave as their response to the last cue ¿*Dónde?* ¿*Cuándo?*. An actual place and time needed to be given.

Situation 2 – Catching a train in Spain

Some candidates found it difficult to express ‘departs’ stating *departe*.

Situation 3 – At the department store

Candidates generally found the second cue difficult, stating *fasi6n*.

Situation 4 – Arriving at a youth hostel

Many candidates had difficulty with the first cue. They were often unable to use the past tense. Candidates are reminded that a variety of tenses may be used in the examination. Some candidates could not express ‘credit card’ or ‘meals’.

Situation 5 – Taking a break

This situation was challenging for most candidates.

Many candidates could not express their ideas in the past tense.

Some candidates had difficulty in expressing ‘to go for a jog’ and ‘sleep in tomorrow’.

Written Examination

Section I – Reading Skills (30 marks)

General Comments

Most candidates answered the questions well.

Question 1 – *Discotecas*

Part (a) – Candidates generally answered this question well. Some candidates had difficulty with the word *locales*.

Part (b) – Candidates generally answered this question well, although some gave ‘identification’ as one of their responses instead of ‘showing or presenting identification’.

Part (c) – Candidates had difficulty with the conditional *si quieren* and therefore were unable to answer the question fully. Candidates also had difficulty with the word *casi*.

Part (d) – Candidates found *los chicos hacen lo mismo, casi siempre en grupos* challenging.

Question 2 – *Las Vacaciones*

Part (a) – Candidates had difficulty answering this question fully. Some candidates did not answer the ‘Why?’, but found at least one possible method of travelling through the South of Argentina.

Question 3 – *Yo soy actor*

Part (a) – Some candidates had difficulty with *les damos vida propia*.

Part (b) – Candidates generally answered this question well, although some candidates translated *fútbol* as ‘football’, instead of ‘soccer’.

Part (d) – Candidates had difficulty with *deseos de poder*.

Question 4 – *La Participación Española en la Exposición Universal de Hannover 2000*

Part (b) – Candidates had difficulty with *la plaza central*. Some also did not include in their response details about both location and construction of the Spanish Pavilion.

Part (c) – Some candidates had difficulty with *exposición*.

Part (d) – Candidates generally answered this question well.

Section II – Writing Skills (20 marks)

General Comments

Candidates are reminded to clearly indicate the question they are attempting. Candidates are also advised to plan their work before putting pen to paper. On completion, candidates should check their work carefully for agreements and consistency in the use of register. Candidates are also advised to adhere to the word limits (set in questions 6 and 7), as overlong responses often compounded errors.

Question 5 – Guided Dialogue

Most candidates attempted to address all the set cues and generally used the Formal Register appropriately. Some candidates were resourceful when responding to certain cues, e.g. ‘in order to improve your Spanish’.

Some candidates did not use the reflexive verbs and future tense correctly.

Candidates found the following expressions challenging:

‘.... to do an intensive Spanish language course’

‘.... going to be staying at’

Question 7 – Letter

Part (a) – While most candidates used the conventions for writing an informal letter well, many did not provide sufficient, appropriate or even relevant material concerning the topic, ‘Something exciting next weekend’.

Candidates are advised to choose a writing task carefully, mindful of the grammatical and vocabulary items they will need to use. It is far better to write something simple, but correct, than attempt to write something sophisticated, witty or adventurous in language, which is not correct.

2/3 Unit (Common)

Listening Skills (25 marks)

Most candidates demonstrated a very good understanding of the Dialogue and News Items.

It was pleasing to note that this year, the candidates who answered in English avoided the use of cognates. Those in Spanish made a genuine effort to use their own words. Candidates should always attempt to use their own words.

Specific Comments

Dialogue

This was done successfully by most candidates.

Noticia 1

Many candidates stated incorrectly that Spanish was the second most used language on the internet. Stronger candidates identified the percentage of publications.

Noticia 3

Quite a few candidates omitted the fact that the *hidrofano* was an underwater device.

Noticia 4

Most candidates had difficulty with Part (c).

Speaking Skills (15 marks)

General Comments

Most candidates performed to an above-average standard. Most presented a convincing argument and assumed the role required by each situation.

The more capable candidates provided a variety of points in a logical and convincing manner. They also took an extremely active and commanding role.

Less capable candidates did not present logical and varied arguments and repeated the same basic idea(s), often in Spanglish or even in English.

Many found it difficult to maintain register (*Hola, señora; pedirte a Usted, ¿tienes Usted...?*) and gender / agreements (*la fin de semana; la gente van; comida japonés*).

Specific Comments

FAMILIAR REGISTER

Situation 1

Most candidates established a good rapport with the examiner as their parent and presented convincing and coherent arguments.

Situation 2

Weaker candidates limited themselves to stating that there are things one does not tell one's siblings but did not elaborate.

Situation 3

Stronger candidates came up with proposals for keeping the job open until after their holiday.

FORMAL REGISTER

Situation 4

The more capable candidates dominated the conversation by stating what they wanted to do. Weaker candidates asked basic questions and threw the onus of the conversation on the examiner. A few set the situation in Sydney and made enquiries about where to go in South America.

Situation 5

The more capable candidates suggested a variety of places and activities, clarifying and justifying their choices. Weaker candidates listed a series of sites, sometimes without stating what these sites could offer, sometimes translating the place into Spanish: *Las Rocas, El Puente Harbour, La Casa del Opera*.

Situation 6

The more capable candidates argued that the opportunity to study and travel to a Spanish-speaking country would be better than having a collection of books or CDs gathering dust and becoming quickly outdated in the library.

Written Examination

Section I – Language

PART A – Reading Comprehension (10 marks)

General Comments

Overall the candidates showed good global understanding of the material and found this passage accessible.

Question 1 – *El Gaucho*

Part (a) – Many candidates did not explain clearly how Sessa overcame the communication barrier. The better candidates explained how Sessa had gained the confidence of the Gauchos over time, through sincerity, honesty and by working side by side with them as equals.

Part (b) – The weaker candidates did not provide sufficient detail in explaining why a Gaucho's life is isolated.

Part (c)(i) - Most candidates were challenged by the use of the word *polainas* and did not recognise the fact that Gauchos from different regions wear different types of clothing.

Part (d) – The majority of the candidates recognized that Sessa’s experience was 90% suffering and 10% pleasure. The stronger candidates were able to identify the various elements in the text which described Sessa’s personal experience. This was achieved by identifying the elements of hospitality and kindness, on the part of the Gauchos, the extremes of climate experienced, the opportunity to experience the country, the people and their culture and the pioneering spirit.

Question 2 – *El cine hispano en el nuevo siglo.*

Part (a) – Most candidates answered this question with sufficient detail. Weaker candidates did not show how the hispanic image has changed since the early days.

Part (b) – This question was not done well.

Part (d) – Many candidates quoted directly from the text *su poder político*, etc as a response to why Steven Spielberg would be prepared to fund the cartoon himself. It is not Spielberg’s political and economic power base which is bringing about the funding, but that of the burgeoning numbers of Hispanic peoples living in the USA. This has led their society to become a force to be reckoned with and taken into consideration, which has moved Spielberg to act.

Part (e)(i) Almost everyone scored well in this question.
(ii) This was generally done well, however candidates are reminded to include all relevant details in their response.

PART B – Writing Skills (30 marks)

Candidates performed satisfactorily in this section of the paper. Most candidates adhered to the correct discourse conventions although many drew upon what appeared to be highly personal information. This often led to the use of inappropriate language in responding to the task.

The more capable candidates demonstrated a sophisticated command of Spanish and a vivid imagination. These candidates were able to produce very polished and creative answers.

Many candidates exceeded the word limit stipulated for this section. Candidates are strongly advised to observe the word limit. Over-long responses often compound errors, are convoluted and confusing and contain unnecessary repetition. Too much padding detracts from the quality of the response required.

Candidates are reminded to plan their writing tasks before actually putting pen to paper and to include only what is relevant to the topic.

Common errors encountered, as mentioned in prior years' reports, involved the incorrect spelling with respect to:

- c / s / z
- ll / y / i
- b / v
- j / g
- que / qui / ce / ci
- accents and orthographic rules
- transference from English to Spanish and use of Anglicisms
- the conjugation of verbs, especially in the plural
- the correct sequencing of verbal tenses and time frames
- the appropriate use and consistent application of register
- the correct verb, noun, adjective, etc. agreement

Candidates are reminded to check their work carefully to ensure that they have followed the correct spelling conventions for Spanish.

Specific Comments

Question 3 – Story

Most candidates made a genuine attempt to address the opening sentence. Some candidates were quite resourceful and creative, using their imagination to produce an interesting and captivating story.

Most candidates correctly placed the cued phrase at the beginning of their essay as required and developed a story line, which progressed logically and coherently.

Question 4

Part (a) – Letter

The more capable candidates satisfactorily addressed all the issues raised. Many candidates referred to the opening and closing ceremonies without specific reference to the Olympics' impact on the community.

Most candidates applied the conventions for letter writing.

Candidates are also reminded once again to never write or state their name, school, address or anything, which will identify them.

Many candidates used set formulaic expressions, which created a stilted and unnatural piece of writing. Some candidates did not maintain the appropriate register consistently throughout their piece of writing.

Part (b) – Dialogue

Most candidates produced authentic dialogues, although some arguments were rather limited in substance and expression.

Candidates are advised to use a range of stylistic devices such as questions and exclamations, which reflect an authentic representation of this discourse form.

Candidates should also pay particular attention to the use of certain words, phrases, idioms and/or colloquial expressions, which, while acceptable amongst their peer group, detract from a piece of writing. Colloquial language should be used very sparingly, and only if the topic truly warrants its use.

Part (c) – Essay

Only a very small number of candidates attempted this question and for the most part produced very polished and sophisticated responses.

3 Unit (Additional)

Listening Skills (15 marks)

General Comments

Most candidates showed that they had a global understanding of the passage. However, many candidates found it challenging to convert their ideas into a succinct summary.

Overall, the standard of the Spanish written in the résumé was disappointing because of the number and frequency of errors and the level of expression used. 3 Unit candidates are expected to possess a rich and extensive vocabulary, a sound knowledge of grammatical rules and the ability to apply to them, and a good grasp of general knowledge regarding the Spanish-speaking world.

Many candidates wrote well in excess of the required number of words and reproduced verbatim what they heard. Candidates are reminded that they are required to summarise the text in their own words, not exceeding the 100-word limit.

Specific Comments

It was obvious from the amount of material transcribed directly that candidates reproduced what they heard without understanding the phrase or its context e.g.

- *los tejidos de Guatemala ocupan una posición de gran importancia*
- *sus brillantes colores, su gran variedad y sus exquisitos diseños*
- *se fabrica en telares de cintura, con distintos materiales*
algodón, seda silvestre, corteza de árbol ...
- *tradicionalmente las mujeres eran las tejedoras*

Common errors included:

- Improper use of Spanish orthographic rules especially in the spelling of names/place names and collective nouns referring to nationalities / ethnic groups :
 - Guatemala* became *Watemala*, *Wademala*, *Huatemala*, *Guademala*
 - Maya* became *Maia*, *Malle*
 - españoles* instead of *Españoles*
 - maya* instead of *Maya*
- Phonetic transference from English, in particular E / I / Y
 - mitología* became *metología*
 - diseño* became *deseño*, *desenyo*, *desenio*
 - indígena* became *indígina*
 - tejedores* became *tejidores*
- Writing in point form instead of continuous prose
- Misspelling:
 - v / b, j / g, qu / c, c/z/s, g/gu, whether or not to use ‘h’, rr/r
- English interference and transference, especially with regard to double consonants
- A lack of agreement between noun and adjective / subject and verb
- Poor paragraph structuring
- Poor sentence construction

Written Examination (35 marks)

Question 1 (a) – Translation

The majority of candidates understood the concepts presented in the text and made a good attempt at an accurate translation. However, some basic and unnecessary errors were made in the process of transferring those concepts.

The most common errors were produced in gender and number agreement, mixed tenses and the usage of Anglicisms.

Question 1(b) – Letter writing

The conventions of writing formal letters with regards to layout, content and tone needed to be followed by candidates attempting this question.

Candidates were again advised that they must not identify themselves, give their address, name their school or any other personal details.

A few candidates changed their style from formal / educated to personal colloquial register.

Specific comments

Many candidates used Anglicism as a mechanism to convey meaning in their writing. Eg. “finantial” for *financiero*; “atiendo” for *asisto*; “sponsor” for *patrocinar*, *pedir ayuda*, *auspicio*; “occasion” for *ocasion* and “counsil” for *municipio*. Spelling errors were noticeable due to the simplicity of the words used by the candidates in 3 Unit. Eg. *jente*, *Vensuela*, *enriquesen*, *provar*, *saver* and *apollo*.

Most candidates lacked knowledge of orthographic accent rules and / or made improper use of capital letters for nationalities and months of the year, eg *Noviembre*, *Brasilero*, *Uruguayo*, etc. Furthermore, there was evidence of frequent errors of gender and number agreements. Markers believe that this inappropriate use of the written language has often occurred due to carelessness rather than lack of knowledge. Only a few candidates demonstrated acquisition of the Subjunctive mood. These candidates were generally the few who also achieved the highest mark.

It is recommended that candidates be aware that to maintain an appropriate register throughout their genre, it is necessary not only to incorporate the use of *usted*, but also the correct use of appropriate lexicon which is part of the formal convention in a written text. Examples are *plata* for *dinero* or *aportación económica*.