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Edexcel

Examiners' Report

Principal Examiner Feedback

Summer 2018

**Pearson Edexcel International Advanced
Level in Spanish (WSP04) Paper 1**

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Candidates have been well prepared for this paper and were clearly familiar with the topic areas covered. Most candidates were able to attempt all parts of the paper, with only a few omitting some more challenging questions. Whilst, many fared well with the comprehension questions in Sections A and B, some items in the sentence reconstructions proved to be difficult. Furthermore, the critical analysis within Section C provided more of a challenge.

Section A – Listening

The opening multiple-choice questions were accessible to most and even the more challenging parts such as 1(b) and 2(b) could be deduced by elimination of wrong answers. It is vital that candidates do not rush into committing themselves to an answer. At this level, they should listen for the gist of the whole passage: a word which is mentioned in the recording does not necessarily lead them to the answer in the question paper.

The majority of candidates were able to insert a word in the gaps which was grammatically suitable; weaker candidates inserted *publicidad* instead of *globalización* in 3(d).

The final question of this section, Question 4 was particularly well answered. Most candidates were able to identify *por un aumento de turistas* as the correct answer to (a) rather than just *muchos visitantes* and many were able to make the link to the correct answer for two marks by writing *un despido más fácil* with *menos derechos* in (b). Some candidates wrote *hay cambios en la ley* and *ganan menos dinero* which were not the targeted answers for the contract reforms. Part (c) in this question discriminated well as the correct answer of *Mercedes ha ganado su batalla legal* was variable as some candidates found this difficult to pinpoint.

A good number of candidates successfully identified the points for 'Pepe' as his job permits *flexibilidad* but with *menos dinero* in 4(d). Also, the candidates were able to recognise in (e) that 'Pepe' *se estresa* and so decides to bring light to the situation and *distribuye folletos* in part (f).

Section B – Reading and Grammar

Again, candidates made a confident start to this section, many gaining full marks for Question 5. However, 5(a) proved to be the more challenging, with only two thirds of the candidates successfully scoring by identifying B as the correct answer and by, understanding that the driver-less car is yet to be ready for the public!

Answers to Question 6 were often very clearly expressed, but a number of candidates failed to score in 5(b) as the text stated that 10 % of the Renewable energy would be provided to the country and not 50%, as this would be for just the region of Mendoza. 5(e) was marked as correct if the candidate was able to clearly express that the region of Mendoza is beneficial for the *planning* of

Renewable energy in the future, rather than the *supplying* of energy to the entire nation.

Some candidates were tempted to write too much in their answers. Reference to the published mark scheme will show the essence of each answer. Longer answers can often miss the point or may start with a wrong detail before eventually giving the correct answer which is therefore negated by what has come first.

In Question 7, specific understanding of the text was necessary to gain the marks. Whilst most managed a very good overall score on this entire question, (a), (b) (e) and (i) occasionally caused a few issues. The targeted response for (a) required the candidate to refer to the fact that the rapper is unique as he has both qualities (of *carisma* and *agudeza*) which, according to the text, is rare! Some incorrect answers for his distinction in 7(b) included *su imagen, su personalidad, su música*, rather than two marks for *sus videos impactantes* and *sus letras juguetonas*. 7 (c), (d) (f), (g) and (h) were answered correctly by a high percentage of pupils, whereas 7 (e) was more variable as candidates mentioned his personality or accent, rather than *las expresiones y palabras nativas*. The final part of the question occasionally caused problems because candidates were tempted to copy more than was necessary from the text. For the mark, the reference to wishing that his music would continue as it is, or to keep growing successfully, needed to be mentioned or indeed mentioned first. Due to the order of elements, the first answer was assessed, so any initial reference to house or money at times negated the answer.

Some of Question 8 was a challenge even for some clearly fluent speakers of Spanish. The idea is to reformulate the sentences, without adding any unnecessary words and not changing its meaning.

8(a): The objective of using the present subjunctive to express purpose was fairly successful, although some candidates unnecessarily inserted a word to incorrectly write *para que pueda construir...*

8(b): The aim for this question was for the candidate to again use the present subjunctive, this time to express that the action has not yet been completed. Whilst some wrote the intended answer of *sin que sea necesario*, the following correct transformations were accepted as they are also grammatically correct: *no es necesario que lleve, no es necesario llevar, sin ser necesario llevar*.

8(c): A good number of candidates managed to reformulate this sentence to include the passive voice in the perfect tense, using the preposition *por*.

8(d): Many candidates reformulated this correctly, with a verb form used as an adjective.

8(e): This was a very successful question and most candidates correctly used the impersonal *se*.

8(f): Here the time construction with *hace* was mostly correctly produced.

8(g): The use of the past participle here was generally accomplished, the accent on *está* and the correct gender agreement were generally included.

8(h): The use of the direct object pronoun was effective by many candidates.

8(i): This question discriminated well and appeared to be the more challenging of the sentence transformations. The use of the present subjunctive to express uncertainty or subjectivity was targeted with the aim of generating *hace que sea más difícil que me escuchen/se me escuche*. Some incorrect versions, offering a slightly different meaning included: *me hace más difícil ser escuchado, hace que me sea más difícil ser escuchado/escucharme* and *se me hace más difícil ser escuchado*.

8(j): Many candidates were able to manipulate the sentence to produce a paraphrase of *asimismo*.

Section C

It is crucial that candidates understand the nature of what is expected in the final essay. Since, marks are awarded for Content and Communication (out of 15) and Critical analysis, Organisation and development (out of 20) as well as for Quality of language (out of 5). It is crucial that some examination time is spent planning the response to the specific question asked. Many candidates who wrote fluent essays in Spanish of a very high quality often scored low marks for the other two categories because their response lacked relevance or were simply a regurgitated version of everything they knew about the topic or work.

Most importantly, candidates should realise that the thrust of the questions set is mostly in the second part. The descriptive first part is simply a *springboard* to allow them to show relevant knowledge resulting from their reading or research. To access the higher mark bands, they must engage in an analysis of the issues. Essays which relied too much on description and less on evaluation fared poorly.

Geografía

There were interesting and well-informed submissions on, for example, coastal regions in Spain, the capital city and South American countries or regions. The best candidates were able to support broad statements with recent statistics or information. Some candidates were able to give good examples of a region's agriculture or industry in 9(a), but not necessarily analyse how it has changed over the years. A fair balance of pros and cons of the impact of tourism in 9(b) was favourable.

The geographical area must be in a Spanish-speaking country. Similarly, essays which did not mention a specific Spanish-speaking area and merely referred to environmental issues in general were irrelevant.

Historia

Many of the essays on historical subjects were full of relevant information and managed to present facts to support general ideas and to draw conclusions required by the questions set. Some very interesting pieces! The historical era or figure needs to be related to a Spanish-speaking nation.

The predominant area of study was Franco and Francoism, Castro, the Spanish civil war and the discovery of the New World. The higher scoring essays include some excellent factual knowledge and dates, as well as in depth analysis on the various impacts or relevance at the time and on the present day.

Literatura

It is not necessary to introduce the essay with general information about the genesis of the work. In fact, this produced a poor start when it appeared. Better candidates provided an opening paragraph which identified the issues to be addressed in the essay with direct reference to the essay question set.

The most common texts studied were *Como agua para chocolate* and *Las bicicletas son para el verano*. Most candidates chose 11(a) to discuss 'Tita's' emotions whilst cooking instead of 11(b) and the relationship between the characters and the kitchen. The more popular choice was also 14 (a) over 14 (b), candidates preferring to analyse the protagonists over the significance of the title.

Películas

Answers were given to all five films in the specification and it was evident that candidates had enjoyed studying these. The most popular choices were *El Laberinto del Fauno*, especially 16 (a) and the character of Vidal, as well as both options for *Ocho apellidos vascos*. 20 (a) for *También la lluvia* was also a popular choice, candidates wishing to discuss the plot and analyse the feelings of the characters.

Careful planning may well avoid an over-reliance on the plot. The best essays were in clear paragraph form with a main sentence to introduce the paragraph, followed by several examples. A final evaluative sentence then often referred back to the essay title in some way.

Overall, this was a paper which discriminated well. Centres had clearly prepared candidates well for the varying demands of the paper. Candidates showed real understanding of complex Spanish in a variety of contexts and were often able to produce Spanish of an impressive standard.

