

CARIBBEAN EXAMINATIONS COUNCIL

**REPORT ON CANDIDATES' WORK IN THE
CARIBBEAN ADVANCED PROFICIENCY EXAMINATION
MAY/JUNE 2006**

SPANISH

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UNIT 1

PAPER 01 - Listening Comprehension

This paper required candidates to respond to a series of questions based on five short selections and one extended interview. These questions were set in English and candidates were required to respond in English. The topics were set in line with the Modules of the syllabus, as well as candidates' experiences in this age range.

Section A - Short Selections

Performance this year in this paper was comparable to performance in 2005.

Selection 1

This question addressed the positive news for pregnant women that eating chocolates is good for babies.

This selection on the whole was satisfactorily attempted with the majority of the candidates' (87 per cent) scores ranging between six to zero out of a possible 12 marks. There were only two indications of a 'no response' for this question.

Candidates however had the tendency to give vague or incomplete responses at times and so, lost marks in many instances. In addition, some candidates tended to give "common sense" answers as opposed to listening to the extract for the relevant material.

- 1 (a) **"The good news for pregnant women"**. Many gave the correct response here. However, there were still a few who gave erroneous answers such as chocolate milk, while others indicated that pregnant women could eat chocolate.
- (b) **"Number of cases indicated"**. Many heard the number 300.
- (c) **"Factors measured in the study"**. Several candidates did not provide information as indicated in the extract. Those who did, failed to include "level" of stress as one of the factors measured in the study.
- (d) **"Positive reactions noted in babies."** This question was fairly well answered. However, there was still a substantial number of misinterpretations, in particular, where mention was made of "active babies" as a positive reaction for eating chocolate. Many candidates also wrote the bare minimum and so, did not give enough of a response to merit the four marks this segment was worth.
- (e) **"Age at which positive reactions noted in babies."** This was not a problematic question for candidates.

Selection 2

This question addressed the high literacy level in Costa Rica.

This selection was fairly well answered with 63 per cent of the candidates scoring at least average marks out of a possible 12 marks.

There was only one indication of a 'no response' for this question.

- (a) **"What is said about literacy in Costa Rica?"** There were no problems with this response on the whole.
- (b) **"What percentage of the population is literate?"** Many heard accurately the percentage, 95 per cent literacy.
- (c) **"What THREE details are mentioned about primary and secondary education in Costa Rica?"**
This question proved problematic where many candidates gave incomplete responses. Some candidates were also careless with the compulsory school-age requirements, and put eight to 16 years and other numerical variations, instead of seven and 18 years of age.
- (d) **"What is the significance of the figure 500 000?"** This question seemed the most problematic and many did not express clearly that the 500 000 figure was the minimum number of students enrolled. Rather many suggested that this was the number of students currently attending classes.
- (e) **"Name THREE main centres of higher learning in Costa Rica."** Many students mentioned these in Spanish and lost marks.

Selection 3

This question dealt with the importance and function of The Amazon Rain Forest.

This selection was well attempted. The majority of candidates, (62 per cent) scored in the higher ranges in this particular question - between four to nine marks out of a maximum total of nine.

There were two recorded cases of 'no response'.

- (a) **"Why is the Amazon described as the lungs of the world?"** There were no major difficulties in answering this segment.
- (b) **"State TWO other important functions of forests mentioned in this selection."** Many candidates lost a mark due to incomplete or vague responses.
- (c) **"How has the burning and felling of trees affected deforestation?"** Some candidates did not interpret this question as requiring a percentage increase by 40 per cent as indicated in the extract. Rather, many gave previously learnt environmental concerns as responses.
- (d) **"How has deforestation affected the ecologists?"** This was not generally a problematic question.

Selection 4

This question dealt with the strong presence of (cigarette) smoke in a President's office which impeded his ability to work.

This question proved to be extremely challenging for the majority of candidates.

The average mark for this selection was two out of six. Responses, in general, were vague, unclear or simply totally irrelevant. However, 4 per cent of the candidate population scored in the upper ranges of four to the maximum of six marks. Comprehension was generally minimal for this question.

- (a) **“Situation faced by the President on his first day as Chief?”** Responses were generally irrelevant and had little to do with the passage. Answers were wide and varied as candidates simply attempted to make up their own stories regarding the situation faced by the President on his first day as Chief. Those who did bother to answer gave examples such as riots, workers smoking, and that he had awakened late!
- (b) **“Reason for situation faced?”** There were many instances of guesswork for the reasons why the President faced such a situation. Mention was made of up-coming elections unhappy workers and that the President was a bad leader.
- (c) **“Action taken on Thursday to rectify the situation”** Wide and versatile answers which bore little or no relevance to the extract were given.

Selection 5

This item dealt with scientists looking for ways to stop global warming mainly by throwing iron into the ocean to fertilize it or by dissolving iron sulphate.

This selection also proved to be a serious challenge to candidates.

Many candidates scored way below average grades for this section. In the zero to three band for instance, approximately 73 per cent, scored marks only as high as two out of a possible nine, while a mere 4 per cent of candidates scored in the upper ranges of seven to nine marks.

There were nine cases reported of no responses.

- (a) **“Describe the persons on the mission?”** Many candidates were able to identify that they were scientists but failed to indicate how many. Many candidates wrote German scientists instead of 49 scientists. In addition, candidates repeatedly confused scientific with scientists and failed to give correct figures.
- (b) **“From where did these persons leave and what was their destination?”** Many did not hear Germany as the country of departure nor Antarctica as their final destination. Instead, many simply assumed that everything was based in the Antarctic.
- (c) **“What was the aim of their mission?”** There was the greatest of variation of responses for this question. Many candidates seemed totally confused. Instead of the aim being to stop global warming, many candidates claimed that the scientists’ mission was to save and investigate the planet. Moreover, there were also many far-fetched responses such as “astronauts who were leaving Earth in a space ship to observe the ozone layer” - and even “to observe the amount of oxygen on the planet”.
- (d) **“How did they hope to achieve this aim?”** Many candidates did not grasp the concept of throwing iron into the ocean nor of dissolving iron sulphate into it in order to achieve their aim. Consequently, many fabricated responses that had little to do with the passage. Such responses ranged from environmental-based stereotypes such as campaigning, to ridiculous responses which embraced space travel.

Section B - Extended Interview

Selection 6

This selection dealt with the topic of The Human Borders in Arizona giving humanitarian aid to illegal immigrants in the Arizona desert.

Overall, candidates performed satisfactorily for the interview. Marks ranged from 11 to four out of a maximum of 24.

There were ten reported cases of no responses. Nine candidates in the top end band of 20 to 24 marks (maximum).

PART 1

- (a) **“Why was the organization Human Borders started?”** While some candidates answered this question correctly, many believed that ‘Human Borders’ was an organization working against illegal immigrants.
- (b) **“What are the TWO aims of the organization?”** Many candidates did not state that the organization offered humanitarian aid. Rather, financial aid was a very popular assumption. In addition, many believed that the Organization’s role was to help immigrants to gain entrance into the United States and then to protect them.
- (c) **“What explanation does Mr Hoover give for the presence of the illegal immigrants in the desert?”** Many candidates missed the answer completely. Some managed to gather the words “border” and “urban”. However, putting together sentences in a meaningful way proved somewhat challenging in order to justify the presence of illegal immigrants in the desert.
- (d) **“State FOUR conditions faced by illegal immigrants in the desert?”** This question was well done and most candidates were able to identify conditions faced by illegal immigrants in the desert readily.

PART 2

- (a) **“What is the main obstacle faced by Human Borders?”** Many candidates answered this item well.
- (b) **“How does Mr Hoover respond to the allegation that he may be committing a federal crime?”** With regards to the allegations of Mr Hoover committing a federal crime, candidates seemed unable to express themselves. Many wrote that he was not helping and not protecting. They mixed up or left out the fact that humanitarian help was being provided. Others mentioned the word passive help but omitted the human aspect.
- (c) **“How many people were arrested at the Arizona border last year?”** The number 600 000 seemed unclear as the majority of the candidates wrote 600 as the number of immigrants arrested last year.
- (d) **“State TWO measures used by the Organization to change the immigration policies.”** Many candidates lost most of their marks for this question. Candidates did not fully grasp the different measures undertaken by Human Borders to change immigration policies and so, gave incomplete answers such as “giving more American visas to families”, “start a programme of work” and “giving more visas for persons to enter the U.S.A.” Such vague responses could have been clarified with the addition of words or phrases such as “reuniting families”, “introduction of” a work programme or “legalizing Mexican” immigrants already in the USA.

Overall, this component of the examination indicated that the candidates still need to sharpen their listening skills. Teachers need to continue emphasizing the importance of listening to native speakers as part of their overall quest for proficiency in this skill. More importantly, answers should be based on the information provided from the examination material.

PAPER 02 – Reading and Writing

Candidate performance in this paper was good. Many candidates showed a good level of comprehension skills and many showed good control of the language.

Section A – Reading Comprehension

Passage 1 – Hijo, siempre estás en la luna

This was a compulsory question which tested the candidates' ability to understand a passage of contemporary Spanish based on a topic related to Module 1 of the syllabus. The passage required candidates to read the passage in the target language and respond in English to questions asked in English.

Overall, the passage seemed to be well-understood by the majority of candidates. This is evidenced by the fact that more than 80 per cent of the responses fell in the 15-24 range, and at least 40 per cent of the candidates were able to score in the 20-24 range. There were no candidates scoring in the 0-5 range and few responses scored less than 10 out of the possible 24 marks.

The expressions used in the passage were comfortably handled with candidates giving, for the most part, suitable responses to the questions asked. For the first question "What disorder is described in the passage?", the majority of candidates were able to identify the disorder and symptoms described in the passage.

When asked how the disorder affected children, most candidates were able to summarize the consequences of the disorder adequately. There were two vocabulary items that posed problems for a fair number of candidates. The words "*cursos*" and "*bachillerato*" were incorrectly understood to mean "*curses*" or "*obscene language*" and "*bachelor's degree*" respectively.

Question (c) "Explain the consequences for children if they do not get special attention at school." and question (d) "Describe THREE causes of this disorder revealed in the "new England Journal of Medicine", posed no problems with most candidates arriving at the correct answers. There were some challenges in responding to question (e), "Explain the theory given in paragraph 3" and question (f), "Describe how this disorder can be treated", where some candidates failed to provide adequate information in their responses. Candidates are to be reminded that they must pay attention to the requirements of the questions, as marks are awarded based on the details presented on the passage, and incomplete answers are not rewarded with full marks.

Passage 2 - Automóviles recalientan el planeta

This was a compulsory question testing the candidates' ability to understand a passage in the target language and to respond in Spanish to the questions in Spanish. Overall, candidates' performance in this section of the paper was fair with close to 70 per cent of candidates scoring in the 10-19 range out of the total of 24 marks. The most frequently occurring score was within the 10-14 range with 40 per cent of candidates scoring in this (range). Only a few candidates scored in the 0-5 range.

Candidates had difficulty analyzing the information and extracting the necessary points that were required. There were also problems in understanding the questions, with candidates giving irrelevant answers to questions. There was some confusion in answering questions (a) (i), “Según el pasaje, ¿de qué se preocupa ‘worldwatch’?” and (a) (ii), “Cuál es la causa de esta preocupación?”, with candidates giving the required response for part (ii) in their response to part (i). Apart from trying to understand the passage, candidates must be encouraged to analyze the questions themselves so that their responses can be more accurate.

For question (b), “Explica con ejemplos, como contribuye los Estados Unidos al problema en cuestión”, many candidates failed to provide sufficient detail in their responses. As a result, they were unable to score the full marks allotted. There was also confusion between questions (c), “¿Qué contribución ha hecho Brasil para ayudar a evitar el desastre?” and (d) (i), “Qué es Pico y Placa?”. Many candidates discussed the initiatives taken by the Colombian government in response to the question asked about the Brazilian contribution.

Question (e) Parts (i), “Además de lo mencionado en el pasaje, ¿Qué otros factores contribuyen a la destrucción del medioambiente?” and (ii), “¿Cómo podemos contribuir a evitarla?” was generally well handled. Candidates were able to provide suitable responses to the questions. However, there were a fair number of candidates who failed to follow the instruction of the question to provide information which was not already mentioned in the passage. Many responses repeated what was stated in the passage. No marks were awarded to these responses.

While there was evidence that the passage was reasonably understood, a fair number of candidates failed to follow the instruction of answering questions in their own words. Many responses were taken directly from the passage. This was a trend for all the questions based on the passage and candidates were penalized for disregarding these instructions.

Section B - Essay

In this section, candidates were required to write an essay in **Spanish** of 250-300 words on **one** of five topics. This section tested the candidates’ ability to express themselves in Spanish in an informed, analytical and logical manner on a topic related to the theme “**La Sociedad y Los Asuntos Sociales**” as detailed in Module 2 of the syllabus.

Examiners were looking for essays with -

- i) an **introduction** outlining the position taken by the candidate on the topic chosen for discussion;
- ii) **three to five paragraphs** focusing on the various angles of the topic; and
- iii) a **brief conclusion** summarizing the main points of the views expressed by the candidate in the main body of the essay.

Candidates’ performance was judged by the relevance of the essays’ content and specifics of the question, the organization and coverage of the facts, ideas and opinions. The level and range of vocabulary, and accuracy of grammatical structures used, were also taken into consideration.

The most frequently attempted question was #5 “**La ausencia de los castigos corporales en las escuelas es la causa directa de la delincuencia en la sociedad. ¿Estás de acuerdo?**” Some of these responses were contradictory; while the main body of the essay supported one side of the argument, the conclusion reflected the opposite. Many candidates did not maintain the focus of the question and often strayed from their original point of view. Many argued the pros and cons of corporal punishment with little or no emphasis on the correlation between the absence of corporal punishment in schools and the crime rate in society.

Questions 4 and 6, 7 were also fairly popular choices among the candidates. However, it was again evident that many candidates at this level lacked the maturity of thought necessary to manage these topics in more than a superficial manner.

Q4 “El aumento en los casos de abuso sexual de los menores indica que la sociedad va empeorando aun más. ¿Qué opinas?” – A small percentage of candidates dealt with this topic well. Once more, many responses basically constituted a list of ways in which minors are sexually abused but failed to show whether or not the candidate was of the opinion that this behaviour was an indication of a worsening society.

Q6 “Los empleados debieran crear nuevos tipos de trabajo en vez de esperar que el gobierno resuelva sus problemas. ¿Qué opinas?” – The candidates who chose this topic were very limited in the scope of arguments presented either for or against. They perhaps lacked knowledge of the subject matter under discussion or lacked mastery of the vocabulary required to express themselves.

Q7 “La iglesia ha perdido credibilidad en el mundo moderno. Comenta.” – Very few candidates were able to present cogent arguments either for or against this topic and many essays degenerated into sermons on faith and Christianity rather than a sensible discussion of the topic presented.

Very few candidates attempted **Q3 “Las sociedades hispanoamericanos han cambiado a causa del papel agresivo de la prensa. Discute.”** Most of those who did, appeared to have researched the topic and, therefore, had a solid basis from which to launch their discussion. Many of these candidates demonstrated a good command of the language and structures needed to express themselves at this level and were able to make the link between cause and effect vis à vis the press in Hispanic countries and the changing society.

Most candidates fell into the ‘Satisfactory’ or ‘Good’ category with some in the ‘Very Good’ and a few in the ‘Excellent’. There were also some at the lower end of the spectrum, those deemed ‘Limited’, ‘Ungradeable’ or who offered ‘No Response’. For a significant proportion of the candidates, there was some misinterpretation of the thrust of the question and simply not enough indepth analysis of the topic. Candidates must also pay close attention to the word limit set. Some candidates put themselves at a disadvantage since poor handwriting made some essays extremely difficult to decipher.

Incredibly, a number of basic grammatical errors highlighted in last year’s report recurred with alarming frequency. These deficiencies given below need to be addressed with a view to eliminating them once and for all.

- Spelling and accent errors
- Omission of the definite article before nouns at the beginning of a sentence
- Radical-changing verbs – ***mostrar, encontrar, poder, contar con, querer, pensar, perder***
- ***Creer*** vs ***crear***
- Positon of Adjectives
- ***Ser*** vs ***Estar***
- ****Realizar*** for ***Darse cuenta de que***
- ****Porque de*** for ***a causa de***
- ****‘La’ problema***
- Use of Direct and Indirect Object Pronouns – ****no haceránlo***
- Formation of Future Tense

* Indicates an incorrect grammatical form

- Subject/Verb agreements
- Noun/adjective agreements
- Correct prepositions after verbs which normally take them
- **Tener vs Haber** – **La iglesia ha la iniciativa*
- Incorrect use of **Estar** with passive when **Ser** should have been used
- Incorrect formation of the Past Participle especially the irregular Past Participles: **ha hacio*, **ha morido*, **ha descubierto*, **ha expuesto*
- Placement of ‘no’ in a negative sentence – **es no*, **son no contenta*, **hay no consecuencias*
- **Bien** for **bueno**
- **Sí** for **if**
- **Mirar** – to look for
- **Más malas*, **más buenos*
- **Un otro* for *otro*
- **Para los* for *para ellos*
- **Nunca enseñaronle*
- **No son muy éxito*
- **No es derecho*
- **Son nacen*
- **La tanta de* – the amount of
- **Alguien ellos* – some of them
- **Los profesores son muy lo siento*
- **Muchos tiempos* – often, many times
- *Sus vidas* for *la vida*
- **Todos las iglesias*
- **‘Los’ instituciones*
- *Este, Esta, aquel* for *esto*
- *Las gentes, los gentes*
- Tener que + the infinitive – **tener crear*
- **De el* for *del*
- **A el* for *al*
- Anglicisms – **expectar*, **desarrollo*
- Use of the Subjunctive
- Conjugation of verbs
- Use of appropriate tenses

At this level, candidates should be encouraged to read more widely and gain exposure to various aspects of the topics being studied. Candidates must also be guided on what constitutes an argumentative essay which is the format that most of these essays take.

PAPER 03 - Literary Extracts and Themes

Section A - Literary Extracts

This section required candidates to read a literary extract and comment on character, plot, setting and simple literary techniques. Candidates had a choice of four extracts taken from texts studied in the syllabus. The passages were taken from the following texts: “Felices días Tío Sergio”, ‘17 Narradoras latinoamericanas’, “Crónica de una muerte anunciada” and “La familia de Pascual Duarte”. Passage one was not attempted by many candidates perhaps because this text was new to many candidates. Performance on this paper was better than in 2005 perhaps because candidates were given passages that they already would have been familiar with during their study of the various texts. However not many candidates scored at the top of the scale. Only 21 per cent of candidates scored between 13 and 16 marks, while 31 per cent scored between 9 and 12 marks, and 35per cent scored between 4 and 8 marks. Only 12 per cent scored between 0 and 4.

Passage One: La salida del Tío Sergio

Question 1 – Relata la trama del episodio.

This question was well answered, as candidates were able to relate the main elements of the passage given.

Question 2 – ¿Qué técnica se emplea para describir a los turistas en el primer párrafo?

Some candidates had difficulty with this question as they failed to see the simile in “los turistas americanos y alemanes, gorditos y rojitos como salchichitas”. Some identified the simile but failed to explain adequately the reason such a simile was appropriate.

Those candidates who saw the comparison between the hurried pace of the tourists and Tío Sergio’s slow gait were also given credit for citing comparison as the technique in use.

Question 3 – Describe las emociones del protagonista al ver salir a su tío.

This question was well answered. Most candidates saw the different emotions experienced by the protagonist. Some, however, included information from their previous knowledge of the novel instead of limiting their focus to the passage presented.

Question 4 - ¿Cómo se caracteriza el tío?

Whereas some candidates limited their characterization to how the narrator described Tío Sergio on seeing him leave “cobarde”, the majority looked at the fact that he had shared his prized possessions with his niece and nephews, and that the narrator loved him to come up with a more accurate characterization.

Passage Two: El beso tan deseado

Question 1 – Relata la trama del episodio.

Most candidates answered this question well though some failed to mention the change in the breeze from cool to dry and warm. This bit of information was seen as being important as it contributed to the protagonist’s thirst.

Question 2 – Describe el punto de vista narrativo.

Candidates did not have any difficulties answering this question.

Question 3 – Explica la técnica literaria usada en “la brisa fresca le diese en la cara y se le hundiera en el pelo con dedos finos y largos...”

The majority of students extended the quotation to the end of the sentence, thereby, including the words “y sin peso como los de una madre.” Marks were therefore awarded for being able to identify and comment on the use of either personification or simile in the expression indicated. Responses were split almost evenly between those who commented on either one or other of the two techniques.

Question 4 – Explica el significado del título.

The majority of candidates gave very good explanations of the significance of the title of the episode. However, in some cases, candidates did not limit their explanations to the episode given. They used their previous knowledge of the story in their responses.

Passage Three: Bayardo San Roman.

Question 1 - ¿En qué persona se relata el episodio y cómo funciona el narrador?

All candidates identified correctly the person in which the episode was narrated. However, many failed to see the role of the narrator as reporter as evidenced by the words: “me contó el alcalde”; “me dijo el doctor...”

Question 2 – ¿Cómo se refleja el tema de predestinación en el episodio?

Many candidates chose to use information they had about the novel as a whole to answer this question instead of focusing on the passage given. Some also erroneously identified the phrase “que había visto un pájaro fosforescente aleteando sobre su antigua casa”, as evidence of predestination. Very few focused on the use of the word “tragedia” and the phrase “habían cumplido ...que la vida les tenía señalada.”

Question 3 – Describe cómo el alcalde encontró a Bayardo San Román.

This question was well answered. In some cases, however, some candidates simply copied verbatim the description given in the passage.

Question 4 – Describe los sentimientos del pueblo hacia Bayardo.

This question was well answered, as all recognised that the town’s people sympathized with Bayardo.

Passage Four: El padre de Pascual

Questions 1 – 3 ¿Quién narra el episodio y qué tipo de narración es?

¿De qué se trata el episodio?

¿Cómo se caracteriza el papá?

All the questions above were well answered.

Question 4 – Explica el significado de las palabras “no necesitaba preguntar nada porque ... gentes hubo a quienes faltó tiempo para venir y contármelo todo.”

Even though most candidates recognized that Pascual had received information about his father's imprisonment from the town's inhabitants, not many commented on the sarcasm of the statement and on the malicious nature of those to whom Pascual was referring.

Section B - Texts

This section required candidates to explore one of two themes listed in the syllabus, making reference to one literature text. The themes were “La Juventud” for which the prescribed texts are “Felices Días Tío Sergio” and three short stories from “17 narradoras latinoamericanas” and “El Individuo y la Sociedad”, for which the prescribed texts are “Crónica de una muerte anunciada” and “La familia de Pascual Duarte”.

Candidates' performance on this part of the examination was moderate. Out of a possible 32 marks 13 per cent of candidates scored between 23-32 in the category Very Good to Excellent; 73 per cent scored between 13-22 in the category Satisfactory to Good; and 14 per cent scored between 0-12 in the unsatisfactory category.

The most popular question was Question 7 “Society always demands more from women than from men”, followed by Question 8, “Societal prejudices can cause certain individuals to feel marginalized.” Questions 5 and 6 were attempted by only 30 per cent of the candidates. The two prescribed texts for these questions were appearing in the syllabus for the first time and it is possible that many schools had had difficulties sourcing them.

A few very good essays were written but most fell into the moderate to satisfactory category, despite the relatively straightforward nature of the questions. Some candidates attempted to answer the questions using the “wrong” text. For example, for question 6 “Youths are adversely affected by the actions of adults” the text “La familia de Pascual Duarte” was used by some candidates. Although they were able to make a few valid points, their comments were of necessity limited because this book's theme is quite different from the theme of the question they tried to answer.

Another problem which arose related to “17 Narradoras Latinoamericanas”, in that some candidates referred to only ONE story, despite the fact that the Syllabus makes it quite clear that the THREE stories are to be considered as a unit. While candidates were not penalized for it this year, they will be in the future. Again their essays suffered because of a shortage of relevant points. Some candidates also misunderstood that the THREE stories taken from this text can be used to answer only one question. For example, some candidates used the passage taken from this text to answer Question 1 and again used the same text for their thematic essay.

Although some very good essays were written for Question 7 “Society always demands more from women than men” the majority fell into the moderate to satisfactory category. Many candidates actually found themselves disagreeing with the statement in question, on the basis of a very thin understanding of the demands placed on men by the notion of ‘machismo’ in Hispanic Societies. Those candidates who opted to disagree with the statement were unable to support adequately their arguments, when compared with those who agreed with the statement.

Generally, candidates showed good comprehension of the texts but fell short in terms of analysis and their own evaluation, often opting for rather obvious and simplistic comments related to differences in gender roles, sexual behaviour and double standards. Few if any comments were made relating to how variations in socio-economic status might impinge on this topic.

In answering Question 6 “ Societal prejudices can cause certain individuals to feel marginalized”, many candidates showed that they did not fully understand the meaning of ‘marginalized’, and the many possible reasons, some self-inflicted that can lead to a person feeling temporarily or permanently marginalized . There were few references to a society that can produce a family, like Pascual’s, and which is largely responsible for his, at times, inexplicable violence.

UNIT 2

Paper 01- Listening Comprehension

This paper required candidates to respond to a series of questions based on five short selections and one extended interview. The questions were set in English and candidates were required to respond in English. The topics set were based on the Modules of the syllabus as well as on candidates’ experiences in this age range.

Performance on this paper was generally disappointing.

Selection 1

This selection dealt with the Columbian singer Shakira’s accomplishments to date.

This question was satisfactorily done as most candidates (59 per cent) were able to score marks from between four to the maximum of 12. Candidates seemed comfortable with this selection.

There were ‘no response’ cases.

- 1 (a) **“What did Shakira accomplish?”** Most candidates were able to readily identify Shakira’s accomplishments as indicated in the extract with minimum difficulty.
- (b) **“How was this accomplishment achieved?”** Candidates were able to note that her new video held some firsts; however, there were some candidates who were not explicit enough to indicate that these videos were also transmitted in Spanish *and* English. A few respondents lost marks due to this technicality.
- (c) **“Explain the significance of Shakira’s MTV concert.”** Candidates tended to be confused with their expression at this point since the response was similar to question 1b. There were many cases of answers being interchanged.
- (d) **“Why was the year 2001 significant?”** Although many candidates answered this well, a few excluded key words to justify the significance of the year 2001. For instance, many neglected to explain that she “received” or “won” a Grammy. There were also many instances where replies made little mention of the fact that her album “Suerte” had also been chosen as the best in the “pop Latin” category.

Selection 2

This selection addressed raising global consciousness in the fight against A.I.D.S.

This question was done satisfactorily where 56 per cent of the scripts processed obtained scores from four marks through to the maximum of 12.

- 2
- (a) **“Number of corporations that joined the campaign”** No one had difficulty in hearing the number 20 as the answer.
 - (b) **“Name of organizer of campaign”** The response: United Nations, proved to be dear enough and posed no major challenge for most candidates.
 - (c) **“Objective of campaign”** Many candidates heard the majority of the response required but quite a few did not indicate that part of the objective of the campaign was “the fight against AIDS.”
 - (d) **“THREE proposed means of accomplishing objective”** This item proved most problematic. Many candidates did not score marks here as their responses did not reflect what was indicated in the passage. Many gave erroneous responses such as books, magazines, notices, commentaries, commercials and documents as a proposed means of achieving the global fight against AIDS – suggesting a lack of adequate vocabulary in this instance.
 - (e) **“Names of FOUR interested participants”** Most heard two interested participants, BBC and Time Warner – maybe because they were close to the English equivalent. However, not many were able to accurately express the involvement of the South African Radiodiffusion – many translated that word to “radio studio / station”. Almost no one included the involvement of the French and very few were even aware that Russia was involved as well.

Selection 3

This question focused on the topic of Tourism.

This question was the most outstanding in terms of student performance. Fifty-seven per cent of the scripts processed indicated that candidates secured a passing grade of five marks up to a possible perfect score of ten marks.

- 3
- (a) **“THREE areas of growth for tourism”**, Most candidates answered this item with no difficulty.
 - (b) **“Reasons for growth”**, Fairly well answered. A few mentioned in error, the increase of the dollar versus the euro.
 - (c) **“TWO countries from which the majority of tourists travel”** Almost all candidates were able to list easily two countries from which tourists travel.
 - (d) **“Reason for choice of destination”** Nearly all candidates were able to accurately give the required response of “direct flights”.
 - (e) **TWO facilities responsible for development of tourism in rural areas of Latin America.”** Many candidates were able to list facilities responsible for the development of tourism in rural Latin America, whereas others were simply giving responses based on their knowledge of tourism and not according to the extract.

Selection 4

This selection highlighted the problems with e-commerce in Spain.

Candidates' responses to this item were unsatisfactory. In addition, there is evidence that candidates may not have been exposed to this concept or vocabulary – hence the guesswork.

An overwhelming 86 per cent of the candidates scored between three and zero marks. Far too many candidates received less than half of the maximum score of eight marks.

Six students scored at the very top of the range 6 – 8 marks, and there were six reported cases of 'no response.'

- (a) **“What is the main problem with e-commerce in Spain?”** This item was fairly well answered as candidates understood that trust was an issue with e-commerce.
- (b) **“What has caused this problem?”** Some candidates were aware that a lack of knowledge was the main issue with e-commerce. However, too many started their guesswork from this question onwards based on their personal knowledge about computers. Consequently, responses were wide and varied with irrelevant ideas such as insecurity with purchases via the internet, inaccessibility to the internet and computer hackers.
- (c i) **“About what must consumers be informed?”** Again, candidates focused on the shopping component of what customers should know about e-commerce. Consequently, many wrote irrelevant and at times incomprehensible responses such as “the main aspect of shopping”, “customers be informed of key aspects of shopping online” and “the ease with which one can shop online.”
- (c ii) **“How can this be done?”** Many responses suggested that candidates were not listening to the tape carefully to hear how one could check, through certification by an external agency, that the site was a safe one. Candidates gave irrelevant responses. Examples such as “informing clients of safe zones”, “significance of the products” and “granting service to these individuals” all suggest that there was little comprehension of this entire extract.
- (d) **What will make the customer trust the store?”** Almost no one knew what would make the customer trust the store and so, many just made mention of common sense ideas such as store personnel admitting that problems do occur and try to find a solution, or that the customers be entirely aware of how such a transaction is carried out.

Selection 5

This section dealt with the benefits of natural gas usage.

This question was handled well by most candidates and the results in this section were pleasing. Approximately 72 per cent of those scripts examined, earned grades between three and the maximum score of six marks.

- 5 (a) **“What goes hand in hand with saving energy?”** Most responses were concise for this item. A few candidates were somewhat vague in their expression and stated that reduction in several types of contamination go hand in hand with saving energy.
- (b) **“What are considered as maximum priorities for natural gas companies?”** Many candidates lost a mark either for not mentioning rational use of energy and the reduction of pollution as the maximum priorities for natural gas companies. Many gave lengthy responses, which highlighted only one aspect.

- (c)(i) **“What is saved by using natural gas?”** Many secured a mark for this item without difficulty.
- (ii) **“What does this saving lead to?”** The response required was not a challenge for the majority of the candidates.

Section B - Extended Interview

Selection 6

This interview dealt with a cure for diabetes.

This interview was poorly done by the majority of the candidates. Of the scripts examined, 78 per cent of the candidates scored BELOW 12 marks out of a possible 24.

Many candidates' responses suggested that they neither understood the interview nor bothered to complete their sentences. Also, even though candidates may have heard essential related words or phrases, their responses were jumbled, and at times important additional information was missing in their responses.

PART 1

- 6 (a) **“Describe the condition of the man who was cured of diabetes”** Many candidates did not state how long the patient had diabetes. In addition, those who had correct fact mixed up the figures for the length of time he was on insulin.
- (b) **“How was he cured?”** Many candidates simply indicated that he had a transplant but failed to indicate the number of donors that contributed to this cure.
- (c) **“What did the doctors have to say about the results of this operation?”** Many candidates incorrectly thought that the doctors had announced that there was a cure for diabetes.
- (d) **“How does Dr. Mina explain Type One diabetes?”** Far too many candidates gave their own interpretation of what Type One diabetes was, as opposed to what was indicated in the passage. There were many variations of what was said on the tape and this proved to be a very challenging question for candidates.

PART 2

- (e)(i) **“Why was more than one donor needed for the operation?”** Many candidates did not include the number of cells required or simply stated one million as opposed to more than.
- (ii) **“Where were the cells injected?”** Many candidates did not know the vocabulary for liver. Many assumed the cells were to be injected into his kidney.
- (d) **“How did the patient respond to the operation?”** Most candidates answered only partially on how the patient responded to the operation. Little mention was made that he had never felt better. There was only passing mention of his elation. There seemed to be some confusion between his current feelings of elation as compared to his previous state. Moreover, little reference was made to the fact that he had suffered from this condition and very few made mention of the fact that he felt as if he was dreaming.

- (d) **“State the reason for the patient still requiring medication.”** There were several cases of no responses for this item. Many who attempted it, believed that he needed medication to maintain a healthy body and that he would still require insulin as opposed to the prevention of a rejection of the transplanted cells.
- (e) **“What evidence indicates that the technique involved in the operation is still not perfect?”** There were many omissions to this question. Some candidates believed that there was still a need for more transplants in the future, or that similar operations on other patients were more successful. These responses contrasted sharply with the fact that two patients who received the same transplant still required insulin.

GENERAL COMMENTS

Teachers MUST remind students to listen carefully to the extracts and to base their responses only on what they hear and not on any personal knowledge they may have of a topic.

The passages should be carefully assessed for audio quality and then dubbed to hear what secondary copies sound like. Dubbing puts candidates in a disadvantageous position if not done properly.

PAPER 02 – Reading and Writing

Section A- Reading Comprehension

Candidates’ performance on this paper was generally good.

Passage 1 - Los hispanos en los Estados Unidos

This was a compulsory question, testing candidates’ ability to understand a passage on contemporary Spanish on a Topic related to Module 1 of the syllabus. Questions and answers were in English.

The responses to the questions for this passage proved that there was a very high level of understanding of the material. Almost 90 per cent of the responses scored at least 15 out of the possible 24 marks and just over 55 per cent scored in the 20-24 range.

The information required for answering questions (a) to (e) was well understood, judging from the high level of correct answers that were seen. Some candidates did lose marks for question (c) (*What comparison is made between Hispanics and Blacks?*), because they failed to provide adequate details in their responses. Candidates need to be reminded that they must pay close attention to the mark allocations in their responses as this is often a general indication of the level of detail that is required in the responses.

Question (f), “What differences were found between Hispanics born in the United States and Hispanic immigrants in terms of language?” also posed some problems because of the misinterpretation of some vocabulary items. Some candidates translated the expression “*tanto...como*” to mean “*more than*” and the word “*viviendas*” was widely understood to mean “*daily lives*”. There were also a fair number of responses (to this question) that gave the statistic “*6 out of ten*” rather than the “*7 out of ten*” stated in the passage. This misunderstanding of these items resulted in a loss of marks for many candidates.

Questions (g) to (k), which required synonyms for given expressions were very well-handled. Most candidates scored at least 4 out of the total 5 marks for these questions.

Passage 2 - Costa Rica contra el turismo sexual

This was another compulsory question that required candidates to respond to questions *in their own words* in Spanish to questions in Spanish.

The contents of this passage proved to be difficult for some candidates. Only 60 per cent of candidates were able to score at least 15 of the possible 24 marks, and just 25 per cent of candidates were able to score in the 20-24 range. The highest frequency of scores was in the 15-19 band with just over 35 per cent of candidates scoring in this category.

There was quite a lot of misinterpretation for question (a) parts (i), “¿Qué decisión ha tomado Costa Rica con respecto al sector turístico?” and (ii), “¿Por qué ha tomado tal decisión?”. It was evident that candidates misinterpreted the expression “*a cursos de entrenamiento*” as many responses stated that persons were *being sent on vacation*. Many candidates also failed to give sufficient detail for the question on why the decision was taken by the Costa Rican government. This lack of sufficient detail was again repeated for question (b), “Explica lo que se dice en el párrafo dos en cuanto a los taxistas”. Again, it is necessary to stress to candidates the importance of paying particular attention to mark allocations of questions.

Question (c) parts (i), “¿Cuál es la raíz del escepticismo sobre el éxito del proyecto de parte de los taxistas?” and (ii), “¿De qué están preocupados?” and question (d) “¿Qué se sabe de la situación financiera de Costa Rica y la importancia del turismo a su economía?”, were all well-handled with the majority of responses earning full marks for these (questions). There was also a fair attempt by candidates, to respond to question (e), “Describe DOS ventajas y DOS desventajas del turismo en un país en vías de desarrollo.” Many candidates used examples from their own countries quite effectively in their responses.

In this section of the examination, many marks were deducted because candidates failed to follow the instructions of putting responses in their own words. For quite a number of the questions, there was “lifting” of entire sentences from the passage into the responses. Some candidates also attempted to change just one or two words in the sentences. However, this was **not** considered by examiners as candidates attempting to answer in their own words. Candidates must be warned that the disregard of the clearly stated instructions results in the loss of marks.

Section B – Essay

In this section candidates were required to write an essay in Spanish of 250 – 300 words on one of five topics. This section tested candidates’ ability to express themselves in Spanish in a balanced, coherent and analytical manner on a topic related to the theme of Module 2 – ‘**La Industria, el Comercio y los Asuntos Económicos**’ as outlined in the syllabus. As in Unit 1, examiners were looking for essays which focused specifically on the topic presented for discussion, comprising -

- (i) an **introduction** stating the position taken by the candidate;
- (ii) **three to five paragraphs** examining the various angles of the subject; and
- (iii) a brief **conclusion** summarizing the essence of the arguments advocated in the main body of the essay.

Candidates’ performance was judged by the **relevance** of the content to the specifics of the question, the **organization** and **coverage** of the facts, ideas and opinions including the level and **range of vocabulary** and **accuracy** of grammatical structures used. Given the word limit imposed, candidates must always be mindful of expressing their views as succinctly as possible.

The general performance in this section ranged from Satisfactory to Good while quite a few candidates fell into the Very Good and Excellent categories. To a large extent, candidates had a more mature approach to these questions. There was evidence of research, background reading with a wide range of examples used. In many cases, there was extensive coverage of the topic under discussion. It was also pleasing to see the essays organized into a coherent package.

- Q3 **‘Los alimentos transgénicos aportan mas desventajas que ventajas. Comenta.’**- for those who chose this question it was well-done. Essays showed a high level of competence in the language and excellent manipulation of the relevant information. The majority of these essays were well-researched and included a wide range of vocabulary, excellent use of idioms with the occasional minor error.
- Q4 **‘El internet se ha vuelto en un gran peligro para los jóvenes. ¿Estás de acuerdo?’** proved to be the most popular choice this year. This question was fairly well handled by many candidates since they were quite familiar with the subject matter and had a wealth of information from which to draw. Consequently, many of these essays contained a host of relevant facts, ideas and opinions. The level reached by some candidates on this question was exceptional.
- Q5 **‘La clonación de cualquier tipo, sea para reproducción humana o para fines terapéuticos, es mala. Discute.’** This question posed problems for some candidates as there seemed to be some doubt in their minds as to what the term **‘cloning’** specifically referred to. Many essays focused on test-tube babies and the use of enhancement surgery to replace body parts for cosmetic reasons. As a result, some candidates were not able to address or sustain the argument of whether cloning was good or bad since the focus of their essays was flawed.
- Q6 **‘Con los avances técnicos, pronto los humanos serán obsoletos. ¿Qué opinas?’** Performance on this question was fair with a few exceptions. Generally, these essays contained fewer facts and opinions and in some instances mundane and redundant ideas. Clearly, candidates were not well-prepared for this topic and needed more information to answer this question adequately.
- Q7 **‘En vez de gastar dinero en el desarrollo de nuevos avances tecnológicos, ¿por qué no mejorar los que ya existen?’** - the least popular choice among the candidates since it appears that many could not decide what was meant by new advances in technology. Consequently, many of these essays lacked focus and were quite disjointed. In addition, inadequate use of the jargon appropriate to this topic led to some poorly developed essays.

An improvement in performance at this level has been noted and most candidates seem to be more aware of what is required of a good essay. However, there is still too much thinking in English then translating verbatim into Spanish resulting in awkward sentence construction and errors in vocabulary and grammar. Some noteworthy examples are:

- **muchas personas pueden sufran;*
- **la persona a que comunicamos;*
- **hay muchos desesperados sexuales lo que quieren que captan y secuestran;*
- **la presura sangría* for *blood pressure;*
- **un/a otra cosa;*
- **es no;*
- **un largo tiempo;*
- rampant use of **el facto* for *el hecho*.

*Indicates an incorrect grammatical form

The grammatical structures given below must be addressed.

- Subject/Verb agreement
- Noun/Adjective agreement
- Use of the Subjunctive
- Por vs Para
- Gender of nouns – eg. **la'sistema*
- Past Participles – eg. **ha ponido*, **son expósitos*, **han decubriido*
- Relative pronouns – *cual, lo que, cuyo, que*
- Use of the Passive Voice
- Radical-Changing Verbs – especially *mostrar*

Many structural problems encountered in Unit I essays not experienced at this level. Candidates seemed to be more capable of handling this type of question after two years exposure to the language at this level.

PAPER 03

LITERARY ANALYSIS AND THEMES

This question required candidates to answer questions on one of four passages. Candidates had to choose one passage from among four, based on the literary texts they had studied. The passages were taken from the texts listed below.

La lluvia amarilla
El llano en llamas
El coronel no tiene quien le escriba
Chombo

Performance on this question was satisfactory. Twenty-one per cent of candidates scored between 13-16 marks, 26 per cent scored between 9-12 marks, 47 per cent scored between 5-8 marks and 16 per cent scored between 0-4 marks.

Passage One: Los últimos días de Ainielle

Questions 1 – 3 - Comenta el punto de vista narrativo.

¿Qué tono es evidente en el episodio? Justifica tu respuesta.

Explica cómo refleja este episodio el tema de la novela.

The above three questions were well answered.

Question 4 – Identifica ejemplos de la personificación en el pasaje.

Some candidates correctly identified the last sentence of the passage as the one containing the two examples of personification. However, many others erroneously cited “la espuma de los chopos, los huertos junto al río” as personification. They failed to see that this was simply a description of the village when seen from afar.

* Indicates an incorrect grammatical form

Passage Two: Urbano Gómez

Question 1 – Comenta el modo de narración.

Most candidates provided adequate answers to this question.

Question 2 – ¿Qué se deduce de la situación socio-económica de la familia de Urbano?

This question was well answered.

Question 3 – ¿Qué se aprende de la madre de Urbano?

Most candidates mentioned the various negative things said about the mother. Few however, failed to mention that she had had money previously.

Question 4 – Según este episodio y el resto del cuento, ¿cómo se caracteriza a Urbano Gómez?

Although many candidates were able to give a satisfactory characterization of Urbano Gómez based on the information presented in the passage, most were unable to give information based on the rest of the story from which the passage was taken.

Passage Three: El coronel y su esposo

Question 1 – ¿Qué indican las primeras dos oraciones “Este es el milagro de la multiplicación de los panes ...”

Question 2 – ¿Qué se aprende de la esposa del coronel?

Question 3 – ¿Cómo se caracteriza el coronel en este episodio?

Question 4 – Explica el significado de las últimas palabras “No te preocupes ...mañana viene el correo”.

Many candidates chose this passage and the questions were generally well answered.

Passage Four: El joven y el ciego

Very few candidates opted to answer this question. Those who did answered the questions well.

General Comments

- Some candidates did not limit their comments to the passage. They allowed their knowledge of the text to interfere with their analysis of the extract they had before them.
- Teachers are reminded to give students adequate practice in literary analysis.
- It is not sufficient to simply identify a literary trope, for example, personification or simile, candidates should say how the particular trope is used.
- Candidates should remember that the passages are there for literary analysis and not reading comprehension. They should therefore make a greater effort to analyze and interpret the passages presented.
- There is still the tendency among many candidates to describe every third person narration as objective and omniscient. Candidates should be exposed to various kinds of narrations during their course of study so that they will be able to identify and comment on these when they appear in the examination.
- Teachers are reminded that in Unit Two, at least one question will relate in some way to the story or text as a whole.

Section B - Themes

This section required candidates to explore one of two themes listed in the syllabus, making reference to one literature text.

Themes for this section were “La Vida Rural” for which the prescribed texts were “El Llano en Llamas” and “La Lluvia Amarilla” and “Conflictos políticos y sociales en Hispanoamérica” for which the texts were “El Coronel no tiene quien le escriba” and “Chombo”.

Candidates’ performance overall was better on this paper than in Unit One. Twenty-eight per cent scored between 23-32, 58 per cent scored between 13-22 and 13 per cent scored between 2-12. The most popular question was question 7, “Socio-political conflicts bring out man’s worst side.” This was attempted by 37 per cent of candidates. Question 5, “Life in the country is a true reflection of traditional Hispanic life” was attempted by 29 per cent and 27 per cent attempted question 6, “Those who have a close relationship with nature, eventually grow to resemble their environment.” Very few candidates attempted question 8, “Social and racial stratification in Hispanic countries is an integral part of Spanish American culture.” This was perhaps due to the fact that this theme seemed to relate to the novel “Chombo” which is a new book, which few schools seem to have been able to source.

There were some very good to excellent essays for question 5. Most candidates referred to “El llano en llamas” and showed good comprehension of the stories. However, candidates could have referred to more of the stories since they would have had this text available to them in the exam. Some candidates referred to only two or three stories, the most popular being “Es que somos muy pobres”, “Luvina’ and “Nos han dado la tierra”. The phrase ‘traditional Hispanic life’, caused problems for some candidates who seemed to have difficulty deciding whether it referred to the positive tourist-oriented aspects, or the more gritty, negative aspects of life.

Question 6 “Those who have a close relationship with nature, eventually grow to resemble their environment” used the novel “La lluvia amarilla”. Some excellent essays were received.

Question 7 seemed most appropriate for “El Coronel no tiene quien le escriba” and most of the essays fell into the moderate to satisfactory bracket. Again there seemed to be a lack of clarity on the part of candidates with regards to the meaning of ‘socio-political conflicts’, the use of power and authority and the ever present class struggle.

Question 8 - because of the phrase ‘racial stratification’ seemed to incline students towards the novel ‘Chombo’. Some candidates attempted to answer the question using ‘El Coronel’, in which there is a considerable amount of social stratification but absolutely no reference to any kind of racial stratification. This was the least popular question although very good and excellent essays were received.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Teachers should ensure that students are quite clear on which books relate to which theme, since far too many essays were written using the ‘wrong’ book. Students in many cases were trying to force one book into the frame of a question for which it was quite unsuited.
2. Candidates must follow the rubrics correctly. Many candidates wrote essays that were far longer than the required word limit of 350-400 words. While candidates were given the benefit of reading an extra 50 words, in many cases candidates had still made few relevant points due to introductions that were far too long. Some candidates used a lot of unnecessary supplementary material although the syllabus makes it clear that additional material is no longer required. Candidates should spend more time in planning their essays, and ensuring that their comments are relevant and not repetitious.

3. Some candidates used quotations that were far too long, while others, in order to save words gave only the first and last three words of the quote with no reference to page number or edition of the book being used. It is recommended that candidates select quotes that are short and to the point to support their comments.
1. Candidates should be encouraged to study the wording of the question closely before beginning to plan their essay. They should underline key words in the question as this will focus their thinking and allow them to check periodically that what they are writing is relevant to the question. A lot of time is wasted circling around the question and not getting to the point.
2. Since candidates are now writing in English one would have hoped that expression would not be an issue. This was not always the case and grammar and spelling mistakes were made that should not be passed over lightly if candidates are a year or two away from university entry.
3. Candidates need to do more analyzing and less summarizing.
4. Candidates could have referred to more stories in “El Llano en llamas”.
5. Some candidates used the same text for both parts of the examination. It is made quite clear in the rubric that the same text cannot be used for both questions. Candidates need to know that they will be penalized for disregarding the instructions of the rubric.

PAPER 04 – Internal Assessment

UNITS 1 and 2

Oral Assessment

This paper required candidates to make an oral presentation based on a topic of their choice, and engage in conversation with an examiner on this topic, as well as on abstract and/or current issues.

General Comments

Performance on this paper was quite satisfactory. There were fewer submissions for Unit Two since candidates who performed well in Unit One are not required to do this paper in Unit Two since their marks are carried forward to Unit Two. However, many candidates opted to do the Internal Assessment again in Unit Two and there was a marked difference in performance at the Unit Two level.

For easier moderation, Teachers and Examiners should remember -

- to send only five samples and they should be put in the same order on the tapes and on the mark sheets, and should be labeled properly (if the samples are on one tape);
- to introduce each candidate;
- to complete the mark sheets with names and marks for each sample, and to divide the total score into the three modules;
- that no half points should be awarded on the mark sheets;
- not to use microtapes;
- to use good quality tapes;
- to try to use a room free of background noise (traffic, music, talking, cell phones, etc) for the examination;
- to let the candidates do most of the talking;
- to encourage students to speak loudly and clearly;
- that the written assignment is no longer part of the internal assessment;

The following comments should be noted

- Examiners should introduce the candidates for some interaction.
- Some examiners provided positive reinforcement.
- The exam adhered to stipulated time and suggested format.
- The majority of the tapes were audible.

Prepared topic

Many candidates were well prepared and made good, interesting presentations in a coherent and logical manner. It was evident that some research was done on various topics related to the Unit. Others, however, needed to do more research and their deliveries lacked relevant facts to substantiate their points. Some candidates memorized their work and made errors in stress and pronunciation as they hurried to finish their presentations.

Topic conversation

Most candidates performed fairly well in this section while some had difficulty answering questions properly or spontaneously on their presentations, especially those who learnt their topics by rote. Most of the candidates had problems because of limited vocabulary and expression.

General conversation

Most candidates handled this section well. They seemed to feel more comfortable talking about everyday experiences. Most had less difficulty responding to questions in this section, but again, limited vocabulary and expression hindered them. Only a few candidates asked questions. It seems that candidates need to interact more with native speakers because they have problems with pronunciation.

Some common grammatical errors are given below:

- Incorrect use of tenses
- Solo/único
- Sino/pero
- Por/para
- Ser/estar: *son en la casa, *soy estudiando, *la población está grande...
- Subject/verb agreement: *la gente piensan, *yo habla, *nosotros van...
- Noun/adjective agreement: *mujeres asesinados, *muchas países...
- Article/noun agreement: *la sistema, *la colegio, *un carretera...
- Past participle: *no es uso,
- Preposition with the gerund: *después de mirando,
- Personal "A": *influir la gente, *ayuda la gente...
- Omission of preposition: *salgo la casa
- Other: *una resulta, *serioso, *mostra, *jugar, *me prefiero, *pagar la atención, efecta/afecta.

* Indicates an incorrect grammatical form