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Examiners' Report
Principal Examiner Feedback

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Pearson Edexcel International A Level
In Spanish
Unit WSP01_01

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Paper 1: Spoken Expression and Response (WSP01_01)

Introduction

The following report is a summary of comments and feedback from the examiners. This report should be read in conjunction with the "Marking Guidance for Oral Examiners" and the "Indicative Content" of the mark scheme. These materials can be found on the website in the Course Materials section. Please note that the indicative content in the mark scheme provides only suggested answers and is not prescriptive.

The candidate is rewarded for the ability to demonstrate understanding of a target language stimulus based on one of the General Topic Areas (GTA) of the Pearson IAL Spanish specification, and to discuss that same General Topic Area. Candidates need to demonstrate that they can engage in a discussion in Spanish that relates to a chosen GTA and allied subtopics. They will be expected to give relevant and appropriate information, convey opinions, interact, and respond to a range of questions. Further information about the preparation of candidates, the conduct and the administration of this test can be found in the "Administrative Support Guide – Conducting Oral Examinations" which is found under the "Forms and Administration" tab of the IAL Spanish page on the Pearson website, and the "Oral Training Guide" found under the "Teaching and Learning" tab of the same page.

Up to 40 marks are awarded positively as follows for this test:

10 marks for Quality of Language (5 marks for Accuracy of Language and 5 Marks for Range of Lexis)

16 marks for Spontaneity and Development

4 marks for Understanding of the prescribed stimulus card

10 marks for Knowledge and Understanding of the General Topic Area

The test should last between 8 and 10 minutes in total (Sections A and B combined). This time should be divided equally between Sections A and B. However, if the student completes the answers to the questions in Section A in less than four minutes, the teacher/examiner should ensure that the discussion in Section B is extended, in order that the total test time is not less than eight minutes

Section A

Section A requires candidates to respond to four set questions on a stimulus related to one of the candidate's chosen General Topic Area (GTA). The GTAs are:

Youth matters

Lifestyle, health, and fitness

Environment and travel

Education and employment.

The candidate is asked four questions relating to the stimulus card. These questions are mandatory and may be repeated, but for the purpose of fair assessment across all centres, they must not be re-phrased. The first two questions relate specifically to information in the stimulus material, the second two relate to aspects of the subtopic, upon which the stimulus text is based.

For Question 1, it is expected that the candidate will manipulate the wording of the text in order to arrive at a complete answer to the question. This question targets information in the first paragraph of the stimulus text. There are three possible elements to the answer to Question 1 in the first paragraph which must be communicated by the candidate in his or her own words, in order to be considered a full answer.

For Question 2, it is expected that the candidate will find the answer in the second paragraph of the text. It will be necessary to manipulate the language found in the stimulus text to arrive at a complete answer. Personal opinions and information not contained in the text in answers to Questions 1 and 2 will not gain any credit.

For Questions 3 and 4 it is expected that the candidate will give answers which are full and detailed, drawing on the research that they undertook on the GTA, in preparation for the examination.

The candidate's understanding of this stimulus specific topic area is marked out of four. The four marks are not directly allocated as one mark per question. The statement in the mark grid, which best matches the entire performance of section A, will dictate the mark awarded.

Examiners' feedback on Section A

The most popular GTAs were "Youth matters" and "Lifestyle, health and fitness". A significantly lower number of students were tested on "Environment and travel" or "Education and employment".

All eight stimulus cards made similar demands of the students. Nearly all candidates were able to attempt the first two Section A questions, the ones based purely on the text, whereas the level of response to the second two Section A questions proved to be a good discriminator between performances. Candidates who scored 4 marks gave full and detailed answers to questions 3 and 4, demonstrating excellent understanding of the stimulus text and its implications.

Candidates must answer questions 1 and 2 precisely. Those who include information from the text which does not answer the question cannot be awarded full marks on Understanding (stimulus specific).

Candidates are advised to listen very carefully to the questions. They must provide relevant answers which respond precisely to the question they have been asked. They should aim to give at least three details, in their own words, for Question 1 and a detailed answer in their own words to Question 2 based on the information given in the text. Personal opinions and information not contained in the text in answers to Questions 1 and 2 will not gain any credit.

Teacher-Examiners are reminded that they must read the questions exactly as written on the cards. Additional questions and rephrasing are not allowed.

¿Hasta qué punto?, ¿Por qué (no)? and Explica tu respuesta are frequently used in Questions 3 and 4. These question forms invite candidates to weigh up different aspects of an issue and to give opinions. Candidates who gave detailed and well-balanced responses and who considered various aspects of the question were awarded 3 or 4 marks for Understanding (stimulus card specific).

Even fluent candidates are often very nervous at the start of the test. Teacher examiners are advised to read the questions **in Section A slowly and clearly to help candidates grasp the full implications of the question.**

The stimulus cards

Youth matters: Cards 1A& 1B (Escuchar música, un placer que nos ayuda)

In cards 1A and 1B, most students were able to offer three pieces of information in response to Q1 and successfully respond to Q2.

Q3A was well answered by many candidates, who were able to outline the importance of music in the life of young people. Q4A on the positive or negative influence of song lyrics, produced some very good responses ranging from the positive support, solace, empathy and escapism that some lyrics provide to the negative influences that they can have such as violence, drug taking and inappropriate language. Some candidates gave specific references to certain genres of music and individual singers.

For Q3B examiners accepted any answers that outlined how candidates preferred to listen to music. For some music was a useful aide to concentration and studying, for others it provided relaxation and

enjoyment. Some preferred to listen with friends in a social setting and others preferred to listen alone. There were also examples of different ways of listening to music on apps such as Spotify on mobile phones or computers, or at live concerts. For Q4B on the importance of maintaining traditional music, good responses included examples of traditional music genres such as flamenco, salsa and reggae.

Youth matters: Cards 2A&B (La natalidad en España)

This was a popular General Topic Area and most candidates performed very well on both stimulus cards. They related well to Q3 and Q4 and had lots of opinions to share on the benefits of not having children in response to Q3A, and the advantages of having siblings for Q3B.

For Q4A better candidates were able to compare family life today with that of the past, demonstrating detailed knowledge of family life during the Franco regime and how legislation in subsequent years changed family life forever. There were some very interesting responses to Q4B on the best age to have children with some excellent reasons given to support their views.

Lifestyle, health, and fitness Cards: 1A&B (El deporte no tiene género)

Candidates responded well to Q1 and Q2. Q3A and Q3B produced a variety of good responses on the benefits of playing sport in a team or individually.

For Q4A answers ranged from setting up all female sports academies to having more female role models promoting sport on the Internet and on TV. In response to Q4B there were some very strong arguments against the large amounts of money earned by some sports people particularly footballers. It was felt that medical professionals and teachers were very deserving of high salaries due to the vital role that they play in society. However, some candidates argued that sports stars are talented individuals who are important role models and influencers for young people and are wholly deserving of their high earnings, and that some of them donate a proportion of these earnings to charities around the world.

Lifestyle, health, and fitness Card 2A&B (El ruido excesivo y nuestra salud)

Q1 and Q2 were generally well answered.

Q3A produced very good responses on the benefits of sleep, as did Q3B on the problems caused due to a lack of sleep.

Candidates came up with a variety of other external factors that affect health for Q4A. Good answers included diet, advertising, social media, stress, friendship groups, alcohol, smoking and drugs.

For Q4B candidates were able to outline the main causes of stress in our society. Good responses included some of the following: exams, work, social media, friendship groups, city life.

Environment and travel: Card 1A&B (El “boom” de la bici)

Q1 and Q2 were answered reasonably well, but some candidates struggled with the meaning of reductores de velocidad and consequently did not manage to successfully respond to Q2.

Q3A and Q3B on the advantages and disadvantages of travelling by bicycle prompted good, well justified responses.

For Q4A fewer candidates were examined on this General Topic Area but those who did were very well prepared and there were some excellent responses to Q4A and Q4B where candidates spoke about the importance of improving public transport, creating more pedestrian zones and introducing higher tariffs for driving vehicles into city centres. Good responses to Q4B included the use of more environmentally friendly forms of transport such as electric cars, trams and trains as well as creating cycle lanes and pedestrian zones.

Environment and travel: Card 2A&B (El corredor seco):

Q1 and Q2 were generally well answered.

Q3A proved to be a challenging question in which candidates were asked to outline how climate change affects us personally. Better answers focused on how weather can affect our mood and how it can determine what activities we do as well as how our homes are constructed. Most of the candidate who were examined on this topic area had done some research and coped well with Q3B as well as Q4A and Q4B. They were able to clearly outline the main human activities that contribute to climate change for Q4A and good responses to Q4B included the role of world leaders to work together in order to halt climate change. The best candidates were able to refer to legislation and world summits relating to climate change, demonstrating excellent knowledge and understanding of the topic area.

Education and employment: Card 1A&B (La educación secundaria en América Latina)

Few candidates were examined on this card. Q1 and Q2 posed no issues.

There were some interesting answers to Q3A on the importance of finishing secondary education and on the benefits of nursery education for Q3B. Good arguments were presented on the importance of education for social mobility and for creating well rounded, competent individuals for Q4A and Q4B.

Education and Employment:2A& B (Plan de acción para encontrar trabajo)

Candidates had little trouble finding the information to answer Q1, but for Q2 some were unable to communicate that identifying your key skills was the first step required when applying for a job according to the text. Some candidates listed all the points made in second paragraph instead of highlighting the first step.

Q3A and Q3B were generally answered well and there was a variety of interesting ideas on the benefits of previous work experience in response to Q4A. There were very good responses too for Q4B on the advantages and disadvantages of going to university.

Section B

In Section B, the teacher/examiner develops a discussion about the General Topic Area chosen by the student. The topic of the stimulus card may be used as a starting point for this discussion, but the teacher/examiner should move to a more general discussion of the topic area and to discussion of at least one other subtopic within this General Topic Area. The candidates must attempt to show a clear understanding of the chosen topic and use the research they completed in advance of the examination, ideally citing sources they have used in their research.

Centres are reminded that in Section B the teacher /examiner must initiate a follow-up discussion on the same General Topic Area and its sub-topics as the one on the stimulus card. A small number of teacher/examiners asked questions on a different GTA to the one on the card. On such occasions, the candidate's ability to access the full range of marks for "Knowledge and understanding (General topic area)" may be restricted.

Please see below a list of the GTAs and subtopics.

| | |
|--------------------------------------|--|
| Youth matters | Family relationships and friendships Peer pressure and role models Music and Fashion Technology and communication |
| Lifestyle, health and fitness | Food and diet Sport and exercise Health issues Urban and rural life |
| Environment and travel | Tourism, travel and transport Natural disasters and weather |

Education and employment

Climate change and its impact
Energy, pollution and recycling
Education systems and types of schooling
Pupil/student life
Volunteering and internships
Jobs and unemployment

In order for the student to be able to access the full range of marks available, it is essential that Section B be a discussion, not merely a string of questions and answers. The teacher/examiner should pick up on what the candidate says, using this to inform further questions, and encourage the candidate to develop the points made where this is possible.

It is essential that teacher/examiners give students the opportunity to deal with questions suitable for AS level, i.e., to show that they have moved on from GCSE level. Where all or some of the Section B discussion centres around GCSE level questions and there is insufficient evidence of the level of challenge expected at AS level, the student may not be able to access the full range of marks for “Knowledge and understanding.”

Examiners’ feedback on Section B

Choice of General Topic Area (GTA)

The most popular combination of topic areas chosen by candidates was once again Youth matters combined with Lifestyle, health and fitness. The topics of Environment and Travel; and Education and employment have more specialised topic-specific vocabulary relating to them, and so candidates who did choose these topics tended to score well for Quality of Language (Range of Lexis) and generally demonstrated very good or excellent knowledge of their chosen General Topic Area. Good candidates were able to use sophisticated lexical items when talking about Youth matters and Lifestyle, health and fitness, but less successful candidates tended to employ rather pedestrian vocabulary, often drawing on their IGCSE knowledge, offering anecdotal evidence, or talking about personal preferences. Centres should be aware that in order to access the higher marks for “Knowledge and understanding (General topic area)” candidates need to offer facts and figures and/or other evidence of research into the chosen GTA; many offered no more than general knowledge.

Quality of Language

The quality of language was high, both in accuracy and range. Although perfection is not necessary to score 5 in both QOL grids, candidates must use a wide range of structures and vocabulary in order to access the top mark bands of 5.

Spontaneity and Development

In most centres, examiners had a good examining style. They put their candidates at ease and conducted natural-sounding conversations in Section B. In some centres, examiners heard "question and answer-type" conversations. In such tests, the examiner asks many questions and does not respond to the candidate or interact naturally with them. In these cases, even fluent candidates would be less likely to reach the highest mark band for Spontaneity and Development because they do not have the opportunity to engage in discourse.

In order for candidates to achieve a mark of 9 or above in Spontaneity and Development in Section B, they must be given the opportunity to respond to questions that are conceptually and linguistically challenging. Some questions asked by examiners did not give the candidate the opportunity to develop their answers at AS level. Personal questions, for example: "¿Qué deportes haces?", or "¿Qué tipo de música prefieres?" are more appropriate at GCSE level.

Development of responses in Section A is credited in the Spontaneity and Development grid.

Knowledge and Understanding (General Topic Area, Section B only)

Some candidates demonstrated excellent knowledge and understanding of their chosen GTA, but the majority appeared to have not done any research on their chosen topic. Tests, where Section B is a general conversation with the candidate speaking about their own experience and general knowledge, will not meet the requirements for a mark of 7 or above in this grid. In the most successful performances, candidates were able to demonstrate an independent and well-informed perspective on the GTA and were able to support their points of view consistently with facts, information, and evidence.

Recording quality

The quality of the recordings submitted this year was generally very good. It is the centre's responsibility to submit the recordings in one of the formats accepted by Pearson; details of the permitted formats can be found in the "Administrative Support Guide – Conducting Oral Examinations" which is found under the "Forms and Administration" tab of the IAL Spanish page on the Pearson website. It is also the responsibility of the centres to ensure that the recording quality is sufficiently loud and of decent quality.

Administrative matters

Centres are reminded that the teacher-examiner must announce the centre, number, general topic area, and stimulus card number for each candidate at the beginning of each recording. A surprisingly high number of centres did not announce the GTA nor stimulus card number.

