



Examiner's Report

Principal Examiner Feedback

January 2025

Pearson Edexcel International A Level

In Spanish (WSP04)

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This paper is worth 90 marks. It is a mixed-skill unit which consists of three sections.

### **Section A - Listening (20 marks)**

Candidates listen to four recorded extracts in Spanish. They retrieve and convey information given in the recordings by responding to questions of different types.

#### **Question 1 – El cambio climático en México**

A multiple-choice question worth 4 marks. The question was accessible to most candidates. The mark most frequently missed was 1(d), as some candidates did not manage to link *su petrolera estatal entre las 10 empresas más contaminantes del mundo* with *(una de las) compañías más sucias*.

#### **Question 2 - La tecnología 5G en la vida diaria**

A multiple-choice question worth 4 marks. This question also proved accessible to the majority of candidates. The mark most frequently missed was 2(a). Close listening was required to identify that 5G technology represents an opportunity for Spanish society to transform the way in which they obtain the things they need.

#### **Question 3 – Disponibles las 24 horas del día**

A cloze text question worth 4 marks. Candidates had to choose the correct answers from a pool of 8 possible words. The mark most frequently missed was 3(b) as a few candidates did not manage to spot that *despite* the psychologist's WhatsApp status indicating that email would be better for enquiries regarding professional matters, the journalist still contacted her via WhatsApp message.

#### **Question 4 – Una entrevista con el futbolista, Andrés Iniesta**

Candidates listened to an interview with two speakers and gave short answers in Spanish. This question is worth 8 marks. The majority of candidates demonstrated a solid understanding of the question and gave accurate answers.

- (1) Most candidates were able to identify the dilemma facing Iniesta and stated that he had to choose between having surgery for his injury or giving up professional football.
- (2) Most candidates identified that Iniesta was worried that he would not be able to return to playing football. Marks were dropped if the answer simply referred to *no recuperarse* without mentioning *para jugar*.
- (3) Some candidates wrote *es físicamente frágil* rather than identifying that Iniesta lacked physical strength.
- (4) Marks were lost here when candidates focused on the moment when Iniesta took the penalty rather than indicating that he realised he was injured before taking the shot.

- (5) Most candidates identified that Andrés felt a sense of responsibility or duty towards his team rather than a good or positive attitude.
- (6) Most candidates identified that football took its toll on the players' mental health. Marks were dropped if the candidate did not specify that the negative effects were mental rather than physical.
- (7) This was the most challenging question. Many candidates correctly identified that Andrés played without overthinking things and that he had all the moves in his head because he had repeated them so many times. Some candidates offered that Andrés plays intuitively and that he let his moves flow without thinking. This, however, did not offer a separate idea and therefore was not awarded the second mark.

### **Section B - Reading and Grammar (30 marks)**

In this section, candidates read texts written in Spanish. They retrieve and convey information in the texts by responding to questions in Spanish. Candidates also manipulate grammatical structures by re-formulating a selection of phrases taken from the reading texts.

#### **Question 5 – ¿Ha cambiado el papel de la madre hoy?**

A multiple-choice question worth 5 marks. This question was accessible to most candidates. The mark most frequently missed was 5(c) as some candidates did not manage to link *un mero servicio* with option D, *un papel de baja categoría*.

#### **Question 6 – Un mito con varias versiones**

A reading comprehension text worth five marks with short answer questions in Spanish.

- (a) Most candidates gained the mark by identifying that María was considered a goddess. Some incorrect answers focused on either *amada por la naturaleza, iluminada de caridad* or *de gran belleza/bondad*.
- (2) Most candidates identified the fifteenth century. Some candidates incorrectly said *el siglo XIX* or lifted a larger section of the text.
- (3) To score two marks, candidates needed to give two separate ideas about how the *conquistadores* contributed to María's legend. The most successful answers firstly indicated that they tried to catch her but failed. The second element either stated that her pursuers died or that they helped to strengthen the idea that María had divine powers. Those who lost the mark often simply said that María was obliged to hide in the mountains or that she confronted her pursuers.
- (4) A number of candidates incorrectly stated that there were several versions of the legend without specifying that the word *onza* has two possible meanings. The most

successful answers stated that experts thought it could be because María Lionza rode a wild animal called an *onza* or because she might have had a large amount of gold.

### **Question 7 – Un escritor reflexiona sobre la Fiesta Nacional de España**

A longer reading comprehension text with short answer questions in Spanish worth 10 marks.

This question was accessible to the majority of candidates.

- (a) A number of candidates mentioned the local festival in Zaragoza without explaining that it coincided with the national festival. A few incorrectly focused on the idea that they wore *trajes folclóricos* or that they proclaimed themselves *muy zaragozano* or *muy aragonés*.
- (2) The majority of candidates correctly identified that one person cannot be more Spanish than another or that you are either Spanish or you are not. A few candidates incorrectly focused on the idea of different *grados* of being Spanish.
- (3) The majority of candidates were able to indicate that the author was trying to understand Spain and promote coexistence among people living in Spain. Some answers concentrated on *trozo de tierra europea* without making it clear that this referred to Spain and therefore missed the mark. Similarly, lifts that did not change *nuestro* to *su* did not score the mark.
- (4) Many candidates scored full marks on this question, stating that the author stayed home because he felt disconnected from the celebrations. Answers which did not score both marks omitted to explain why the author did not celebrate or referred to not buying books or not celebrating Valentine's Day.
- (5) Most candidates got the mark here although a few incorrectly stated that patriots should go to the processions and applaud.
- (6) Most candidates understood the key idea of freedom and scored the mark here.
- (7) There were many different variations of correct answers here but the majority of candidates correctly gave both elements and scored two marks. Only a few answers incorrectly focused on the idea of children coming out of school or going to coffee shops.

### **Question 8 - Manipulation of grammatical structures**

Candidates reformulated phrases from the reading comprehension texts in Questions 5, 6 and 7. They had to include the given structures in each question. They had to produce a correct phrase, without altering the meaning of the original. The question phrases were emboldened in the reading texts in Section B to assist candidates in reformulating the phrases.

A successful response demonstrates contextual understanding by ensuring that the same message is conveyed after the applied manipulation. Candidates frequently lost marks for incorrect accents or the omission of accents where they were needed.

- (a) Several formulations were accepted and most candidates got this mark. A few candidates incorrectly included a subjunctive verb.
- (2) This question was also correct in most cases. Some candidates missed the mark because they wrote *sigue teniendo asignado* or wrote *asignandole* without the required accent.
- (3) Several formulations were accepted. Answers which reversed the order of men and women changed the emphasis of the sentence and lost the mark. A small number of candidates wrote *ciudadano* instead of *cuidadora*. The omission of the accent on *también* also resulted in the loss of a mark.
- (4) Many candidates scored the mark. The most frequent mistake was *muy de gran belleza y muy de gran bondad*.
- (5) Some marks were lost as candidates did not use the masculine agreement of the past participle and wrote *vinculada*. The correct answer needed *vinculado* because it referred back in the text to *el culto*.
- (6) Most candidates correctly wrote *comenzaron a llamarla*. In a few cases, candidates lost a mark because they used an indirect pronoun rather than the direct pronoun. A few candidates lost the mark for adding an accent, writing either *conmenzáron* or *comenzarón*.
- (7) This question was frequently correct, although some students offered the indicative or future tenses rather than the subjunctive *se sepa*.
- (8) Many candidates provided a suitable subjunctive verb. Marks were lost for verbs such as *viva* or *fuera*. A few candidates incorrectly added *su región* to the end of the sentence which resulted in the loss of the mark.
- (9) The majority of students got this mark, transforming *me siento* to the subjunctive form.
- (10) This was the most challenging transformation. Several formulations were accepted. Many candidates incorrectly wrote *la noche cual* or *el día de San Valentín cual noche es cuando*.

### **Section C - Writing (40 marks)**

Candidates write one essay on a topic chosen from the list prescribed in the Specification for the unit. As in previous series, the history essays (10a and 10b), Ocho Apellidos Vascos' (17a and 17b), 'Yerma' (15a and 15b) and 'Las bicicletas son para el verano' (14a and 14b) were the most popular choices.

The overall quality of responses was pleasing, with many candidates delivering a thorough analysis and providing insightful personal interpretations. Candidates who expressed their personal opinions and perspectives presented more in-depth responses and analyses.

Candidates who chose novels or plays tended to produce a more comprehensive analysis, making references to the historic and socioeconomic circumstances of the time in which the work was set. Those who chose a film tended to make references to the plot but often stayed in the descriptive and were therefore not always able to reach the top mark bands because of a lack of critical analysis.

The following comments summarise the examiners' observations on the most popular essay choices:

#### **Question 9 Geography**

There were only a handful of essays on 9a and 9b. Some essays lacked factual evidence and instead relied on general impressions rather than concrete research. A very small number of essays were unfortunately about non-Spanish speaking countries and therefore could not be credited with any marks.

#### **Question 10 History**

There were a number of very well-informed and well-constructed essays full of detail and analysis. For 10a, many of these concentrated on the period of the Second Republic from 1931 to 1936. Candidates demonstrated a sound knowledge of the period and analysed how political instability affected the lives of ordinary people. 10b was the more popular choice and many candidates demonstrated detailed knowledge of the Civil War and its aftermath.

#### **Question 11 Literature - Esquivel: Como agua para chocolate**

There were a small number of responses and the most popular choice was 11a. Successful essays gave a perceptive account of the differences between Pedro and Dr John Brown, analysing how both men treated Tita and how their behaviour affected her. Candidates made specific reference to the text to illustrate their arguments. The majority of candidates wrote a sound conclusion and decided that Dr John Brown had a more positive effect on Tita's life. A small number of candidates chose 11b considering how the theme of social change is presented in the text. Less successful essays did not move beyond storytelling and therefore lacked sufficient depth of analysis.

### **Question 12 Literature - Delibes: El príncipe destronado**

A very a small number of candidates chose 12a analysing how Quico's family reflects Spanish society at the time.

### **Question 13 Literature - Allende: Inés del alma mía**

There were no essays on this novel.

### **Question 14 Literature - Fernán Gómez: Las bicicletas son para el verano**

There were a number of well-written essays that demonstrated a clear understanding of this text. In 14a, the most successful essays analysed how humour is used in this text and how it affects the audience. Some candidates simply described techniques and did not fully address the "Analiza" element of the question. 14b was the more popular choice. Successful essays showed excellent knowledge of the text and detailed analysis of how the characters managed to survive the effects of the Civil War in their day-to-day life. The highest scoring essays gave relevant quotations and clear textual references to substantiate the points candidates were making.

### **Question 15 Literature – García Lorca: Yerma**

15b was the more popular choice. There were some good essays which demonstrated detailed knowledge of the patriarchal society of the time. Successful essays got to grips with the role of women and how Yerma is affected by the expectations of the society in which she lives. The highest scoring essays offered a full analysis of the relationship between Yerma and Juan and many concluded that both Juan and the social values of the time contributed to the breakdown.

### **Question 16 Film – Guillermo del Toro: El laberinto del Fauno**

Only a handful of essays looked at the theme of good versus evil in the film.

### **Question 17 Film – Martínez-Lázaro: Ocho apellidos vascos**

Question 17a about Koldo and Rafa and the comedy scenes between the two characters was by far the most popular choice on the paper. Many candidates demonstrated a detailed knowledge of the film and wrote well-constructed essays in which they gave a more personal analysis of the film. Some candidates, however, did not fully answer the question, especially the analysis part. A number of candidates focused almost entirely on describing the characters and conclusive remarks were often missing. Not all candidates used evidence to support their observations. In general, candidates had a sound knowledge of the film, although at times that knowledge was not demonstrated in sufficient depth.

There were some detailed and analytical responses to question 17b which examined how society was presented in the film and analysed its political message. A number of essays did not have real depth to them and resorted to storytelling rather than analysis. Some candidates provided only a very brief conclusion or none at all. There were many well-written and well-researched essays showing how society at that time regarded the Andalusians and the Basques and pointed

out that the film appeared shortly after the end of ETA's terrorist activities. They therefore pointed to a clear political message concluding that, despite differences, peaceful co-existence is possible. The most successful essays made specific reference to sequences in the film and analysed the effect these had upon our understanding of the central message.

**Question 18 Film – Wood: Machuca**

There were no essays about this film.

**Question 19 Film – Marston: María, llena eres de gracia**

There were no essays about this film

**Question 20 Film – Bollaín: También la lluvia**

There were very few essays about this film. Candidates chose to write about the differences between Sebastián and Costa and how their values change over the course of time.

**Advice to candidates**

Based on performance in this examination, examiners would like to offer candidates the following advice:

**Sections A and B**

- Take care to answer the questions precisely. Write clear, concise answers. Use your own words as far as possible.
- In two-mark questions, think carefully about whether your two answers give two clearly different pieces of information. Examiners can only consider the first answer in a one-mark question and the first two answers in a two-mark question. Extra information before the correct answer can result in marks being lost.
- In Question 8, find the emboldened question phrase in the articles in Section B. Refer to the bold phrases in the text and check that the transformation fits with the text.
- Also in Question 8, consider the context of the original text. To score the mark, the answer needs to be grammatically correct and convey the same meaning as the original text.
- Accents are important in Question 8 as this is a test of grammar. Candidates should check their answers very carefully to avoid losing marks because of accent errors.

## Section C

- Read essay questions carefully. Make sure that all your points are clearly relevant to the question.
- Candidates must make sure they answer both the explanation/description and the analysis parts of the essay question. They should prioritise analysis over description. The best essays tended to be those that followed the point-evidence-evaluate pattern.
- Write an essay plan. In the planning phase, check that each paragraph has a clear idea which relates clearly to the question.
- Explain clearly when giving examples and other evidence to support your points of view. Imagine that your reader has not read the book or watched the film. Candidates are encouraged to remember that the reader of the essay needs to be able to get the full picture without having any previous knowledge of the film, book or topic. Relationships between characters need to be explained. Candidates should avoid vague phrases such as “en la escena del restaurante”, or “él explica todo” which require the reader to have watched the film or read the book in order to fill in the gaps.
- Always include an introduction which relates precisely to the question you are answering. Avoid general introductions to the work which have little to do with the precise question.
- Essays need to have a conclusion which follows on from the essay content, summarises the arguments presented in the essay and includes a personal response.
- For Question 9 Geography essays and Question 10 History essays, candidates must demonstrate that they have researched the topic. General knowledge is not enough to score highly. History and Geography essays need specific examples, statistics, figures, dates and/or events.
- For film and literature essays, candidates need to include a wide range of different types of relevant factual evidence to support points of view, such as in-depth, specific examples from the text or film, quotations, director’s or author’s technique.
- Teachers should emphasise the importance of handwriting to students. A small number of examination scripts, or parts of them, were almost illegible because of messy handwriting or messy corrections. Candidates must write clearly and legibly. It is very difficult for examiners to credit work if they cannot read it.

