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Examiners' Report
June 2011

GCE Spanish 6SP02 01

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Introduction

This paper tests listening, reading and writing skills. Candidates have to offer a range of non-verbal answers (crosses in boxes) and written-answers in Spanish and English. There are 70 marks available in total, 30 of which are awarded for the essay in Question 8. It is important that candidates leave themselves with sufficient time to write and check their essay.

Question 1

Question 1 was a passage about an eco-disco. Candidates had to select the correct ending to each of 4 sentences. The average score for this question was 3 out of 4.

Question 2

Question 2 was another listening passage, this time about sex education. Candidates had to identify the 4 correct statements out of 8. This question was answered well, with most candidates scoring 3 out of 4.

Question 3

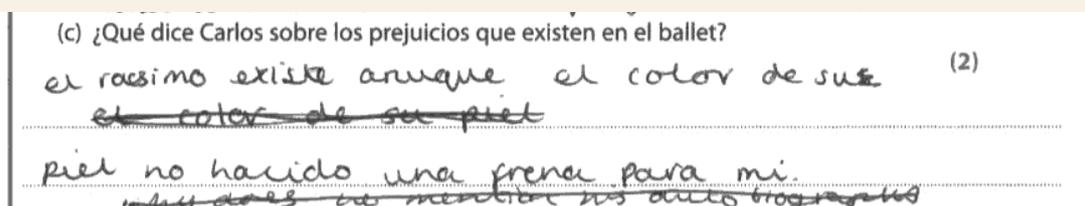
In order to answer question 3 candidates had to select the correct words to complete a summary of a passage about globalization. Some candidates suggested the more obvious idea that the speaker wished to eliminate our national differences, when actually the text suggested that it would be better if we preserved our differences. Once again, most candidates earned 3 out of 4 points here.

Question 4

Question 4 was a listening question based on an interview with the Cuban dancer Carlos Acosta. Questions 4a and 4e caused few problems, 4d was also often answered correctly; where there was an error it was generally in the use of an inappropriate tense (he hoped his autobiography would be an inspiration, it is not an inspiration already). The idea of 'tres bailarines negros' in 4c was often misunderstood. Candidates dealt much better with the idea that Carlos had never suffered from the effects of racism, though he knew it existed.

Other common mistakes were with pronouns. *Te/le/se* were frequently muddled which sometimes meant that the first person was not changed to the third. Vowel sounds were not always correctly identified: 'historia' was frequently rendered as 'estoria' and 'crear' was confused with 'creer'. Examiners overlooked spelling mistakes where the meaning was clear, but when, as with 'crear' the meaning was changed or became ambiguous, no credit was given.

In all of the comprehension questions the first person must be avoided. Because the text of this question is always an interview, the ability to change verbs and pronouns from the first person to the third is essential.



ResultsPlus Examiner Comments

In this example the candidate has managed to change the pronoun into the third person ('le') and has gained the first mark. Unfortunately, he or she did not remain consistent to the end of the answer and the 'para mi' means that a mark cannot be given for this half of the answer.



ResultsPlus Examiner Tip

Practise changing first person sentences into the third. Take particular care with 'gustar'!

When you can only hear a text, rather than see it, there are times when you have to guess the words you are hearing. It is important that you guess something that fits with the logic of the rest of the text.

(b) ^{positivo impacto} ¿Qué impacto positivo ha tenido la pobreza en Carlos? (2)

Lo pobreza dió la oportunidad ~~de~~ crear nuevas soluciones ante la vida y le hace más grande como ser un mano, incluso más tolerancia.



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Examiner Comments

In this example, the candidate has clearly not understood that the text says 'ser humano' and so he/she has guessed 'ser un mano'. This is not in any way logical, though. Candidates who guessed they had heard 'ser un hermano' were at least writing something plausible.



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Examiner Tip

Try writing out what you hear in different ways: can you make sense of an utterance by breaking it into shorter/longer words? Think of letters that sound similar like b/v, ll/y, c/z, j/g and swap them around to see if a word looks more familiar with a different letter. Don't forget that there might be a silent 'h': 'umano/humano'.

Examiners are required to mark answers in the order in which they are given. This means that in a 1 mark question, they have to look at the first answer offered, even if the candidate has given a second answer. In a 2 mark question, examiners will mark the first two answers given, even if a candidate has written three answers in total. The reason for this is to avoid giving credit to candidates who have written every possible in answer in the hope that one of them may be right.

Candidates should be aware that in a 1 mark question, if they write an incorrect answer followed by a correct one, they will not earn a mark.

(e) ¿Qué piensa hacer en el futuro? (2)

~~Quiero~~ no tiene nada especial que ofrecer. Prefiero ir al ~~costa~~ de la playa y descargar ~~en~~ en Cuba.



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Examiner Comments

The first part of this answer does not earn a mark and yet this candidate was awarded the full 2 marks for this question. Why? Well, the first sentence does not earn a mark, but it is not actually incorrect. It is true that he does not have anything to offer, although this is not what is targeted by the question. The first statement has been treated as a neutral introduction to the correct answers that follow.

(e) ¿Qué piensa hacer en el futuro?

(2)

quiere ayudar y participar en los cambios que esta condeciendo

~~de coreografo~~ ^{un} coreografo

en cuba quiere descansar y ir a la playa. (Total for Question 4 = 8 marks)



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Examiner Comments

Compare this example with the previous one. Here the candidate's first answer cannot be accepted ('condeciendo' is meaningless and choreographer is too badly spelled and he does not want to be one anyway). The correct answers which follow cannot score because this candidate has used up his/her two attempts at gaining a mark.



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Examiner Tip

Always put your most secure answer first. There often is more information in the text than you need, so leave any guesses to the end of a list of answers.

Question 5

Question 5 is the easiest of the reading comprehension exercises and it saw most candidates score at least 4 out of 5. Here there were four people talking about how they respect the environment. Candidates had to link 5 statements to the correct person. Success in this question often relies on the knowledge of synonyms as different words will have been used in the grid of statements than in the paragraphs.

Question 6

Question 6 was a Spanish text about smoking laws with questions and answers in English. This was answered well, on the whole, with an average of 3 out of 5 marks scored. Some parts were tricky, though. Q6a required the understanding of the difference between 'closed' and 'enclosed'. Answers in Q6a that suggested the ban applied to all public places (which would include parks, for example) or closed public places did not score. In Q6c only one answer was required from three possibilities, but most candidates put in all three. It seemed unfair to penalise students who had perhaps guessed one of them incorrectly as *empresarios*, *sindicatos*, *partidos politicos* were unusual vocabulary items, so incorrect answers were ignored if a correct answer was given. Some candidates found it difficult to convey the sense of Turkish smokers having accepted a ban, in Q6d, giving rather ambiguous answers about converting the culture. Q6e was by far the hardest element as the word *inversión* was unknown by many. The expression *servir de* also seemed unfamiliar and many candidates suggested that bars were now serving nothing to their customers.

Question 7

Question 7 is the longest and most challenging of the reading texts as the questions and answers are in Spanish. This time the text concerned match-fixing and covered the tribulations of a footballer with gambling debts who agreed to affect the results of his team's matches. The average score for this question was a very creditable 6 out of 10.

Although it is acceptable for candidates to 'lift' a section of the text if it directly answers a question, where there is a first person quote, this has to be manipulated in some way. Copying it inside quotation marks is not acceptable.

(d) ¿Por qué decidió el futbolista ayudar a los criminales? *por que me obligaron a hacerlo* (2)

Porque ~~estaba~~^{fue} obligado a intentar que mi equipo de fútbol perdiera 0-3 en mi siguiente partido - ~~dice~~^{dió} que "me amenazaron con una pistola, me dijeron que me encontrarían, que no (1) "esconderme"

(e) ¿Qué impacto tuvo su acción en el equipo? *el impacto fue que se fueron a jugar a otro partido* (1)



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Examiner Comments

This candidate needed to change all the first person verbs and pronouns into the third in order to have scored here.

A targeted 'lift' can be accepted as an answer, but it does have to make sense.

(c) ¿Por qué se menciona la cifra 20.000? (1)

los 20.000 euros tras apostar en las carreras de los caballos.



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Examiner Comments

Here the candidate has identified roughly the section of the text where the answer lies, but has truncated the sentence lifted from the text so that its meaning is lost.



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Examiner Tip

Try to use your own words in answers where you can. The questions are always written in a way that will allow an answer to be given in language appropriate to AS level. You can use words and phrases from the text, but you must be sure that what you have copied really does answer the question.

(c) ¿Por qué se menciona la cifra 20.000?

(1)

La cantidad que perdí, apostando en las carreras de caballos



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Examiner Comments

What a pity! This candidate has found a way to give the information in his/her own words, but has included the first person 'perdí'. If only this verb were 'perdió' the mark would have been given.



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Examiner Tip

Go over and over your verb endings until you have them firmly memorised.

Examiners will try their best to pick out a correct answer from within inaccurate language as this question is a test of reading skills, not writing. Sometimes, though, candidates 'lift' too much from the text; probably because they do not understand exactly what they are reading.

(f) ¿Por qué necesitó terapia?

Si es necesario terapia, porque es un situación grave la adicción y se puso en manos de su abogado.

(g) ¿Cómo son muchos deportistas profesionales?

Muchos deportistas ~~son~~ profesionales son porque ellos tiene mucho dinero. Como tantos deportistas, algunos la madurez física antes que la mental.



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Examiner Comments

In this example, the candidate has tried to lift the answers to f and g, but the correct answers are left too unclear and no marks could be awarded.

Question 8

Question 8, the essay, is a chance for all candidates to show off the structures and vocabulary they know and to use a little imagination. The topic this year was the excessive use of headphones and most candidates appeared comfortable with this subject. There was widespread use of correct vocabulary, although examiners did see a lot of English spellings and mistakes in even the vocabulary given in the stimulus.

There were 4 bullet-points that needed to be covered and most candidates managed to say something about each of them. There were some examples of the opinion and advice points being rather similar, but also some very imaginative advice given (sometimes in very faulty language). There is a stiff penalty for missing a bullet-point and this was paid by some candidates who overran the word-limit, leaving the final point unread beyond 220 words.

The most common errors with grammar were some of the 'old favourites' like *gustar*, gender and adjective agreement. Preterite and imperfect verb forms were often inaccurate. It was interesting to see so many scripts which included 'if clauses' with the imperfect subjunctive and colourful idiomatic expressions and yet contained many incorrect imperfect and preterite endings. Although examiners will be impressed with complex structures, this impression will be undermined by inaccuracies in basic grammar.

There were various vocabulary errors, the most common of which was *escuchar a*. Prepositions were not used well and there were many instances where similar-looking words were mixed up: *odio/oído*, *doler/dañar*, *sordo/sordera*. Linking words were often used, though, creating longer and more interesting sentences.

Although there was no penalty for using the wrong format, it was nice to see essays which had a title and actually looked like an article.

It is not essential to write the same amount about each bullet-point, nor to write about them in the order they appear on the question paper. However, to minimise the risk of omitting one point or writing too many words on one idea, it is practical to write one paragraph about each point.

Los alumnos pasan demasiado tiempo con su MP3. Por consiguiente, ciertos niños se encuentran aislados ~~por~~ porque prefieren escuchar música en lugar de hablar. Además, a menudo, le escuchan cuando están en clase.

Desafortunadamente, cuando tenía once años, utilizaba mi MP3 con regularidad y escuchaba siempre la ~~ro~~ rock. Un día, cuando fui al colegio, era difícil entender al profesor. Por lo tanto, fui al doctor que me dijo que tenía problemas de oído en causa de mis auriculares.

Por eso, me gustaría dar algunos consejos. Primero, cuando quieren escuchar música, aconsejo que los jóvenes no utilicen todo el tiempo los auriculares para proteger su

audición. También lo más importante es que compran los
auriculares ^{más eficaces} ~~para~~ ^{especialidades}. Yo sé que son caros pero valen pena.
(que se protejan en contra del otro ruido.)



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Examiner Comments

This candidate has written very clearly, using a new paragraph for each point. Here we can see the final two points. It is easy for an examiner to identify the points covered and to see that they have been developed. This candidate wrote equally well on the other two points and was awarded 14 out of 15 for content.



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Examiner Tip

Try to keep your handwriting clear and each idea in a separate paragraph. This makes it easy to read and to check that the points have been covered. This is important for you as well as the examiner!

In order to gain high marks for content, the bullet-points not only need to be mentioned, but developed. Examiners are looking for more than one idea to show this development.

8 Encuentras esta noticia en Internet y decides escribir un artículo para la revista de tu colegio. Debes escribir unas **200-220 palabras en español**. Debes mencionar:

- la popularidad de los MP3, MP4, o teléfonos móviles,
- tu opinión sobre el uso de estos sistemas,
- un ejemplo personal de los problemas causados por su uso excesivo,
- tus consejos a los que usan estos sistemas.

REVISTA DEL DÍA
"LOS PELIGROS DE AURICULARES
PARA ESCUCHAR"

Hoy en día hay muchos equipos de auriculares, por ejemplo MP3, MP4, teléfonos móviles y manos libres. Estos son muy populares entre los jóvenes que los usan diario y ^{que también} abusan de estos sistemas.



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Examiner Comments

This candidate has used a title, which is a good start. The first paragraph covers the bullet-point about the popularity of MP3s and mobile phones etc. We are told that they are popular among young people, who use them daily. The first point is covered but with little development.

La tecnología tiene sus problemas

Hoy en día, la tecnología es una gran parte de nuestras vidas, y parece que todas las personas tienen un MP3, MP4 o teléfonos móviles manos libres, y son muy populares ^{de} especialmente entre los más jóvenes. ^{están} En las ciudades, estos sistemas son constantemente en uso.

En mi opinión, estos sistemas de tecnología son muy buenos y en algunas cosas ~~lo~~ tienen mejorar la vida. Esto es debido al hecho de que ofrecen entretenimiento, porque se puede escuchar a ~~descargar~~ mucha música y se puede hablar con tus amigos todo el tiempo. Sin embargo, es necesario que usamos estos sistemas menos porque pueden empezar a manifestar síntomas de pérdida debido los microondas que producen.

A mi modo de ver ~~Es evidente también~~, que el uso ~~excesivo~~ ^{excesivo} del los teléfonos móviles manos libres, por ejemplo ~~causa~~ ^{causa} algunas problemas ~~ya es~~ ^{incluyendo} una falta de concentración. La semana pasada hubo un accidente entre dos coches y uno de los ~~condy~~ ^{era} ~~condy~~ ^{estaba} usando un teléfono móvil manos libre. También, ~~fuí~~ ^{fui} al hospital y tengo un ^{poco} pérdida de audición que será ~~una~~ ^{se va} aumentar con edad, debido a mi uso excesivo del MP3.

Es evidente que aunque la tecnología ofrece muchas ~~ventajas~~ ^{ventajas} de nuestra vida, hay ~~una~~ ^{muchos} peligros de la salud si usamos ~~en~~ ^{en} ~~exceso~~ ^{exceso} demasiado. Además, pueden causar accidentes. Por lo tanto, en mi opinión deberías usar estas sistemas en ~~moderación~~ ^{moderación} ^{para no abusar lo} y ser consciente de sus efectos y ambiente.



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Examiner Comments

Compare the first paragraph written by this candidate. Here there is much more development. We are told that technology is a big part of our lives, that these devices are popular among all age groups and that they are constantly seen in use in the street.



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Examiner Tip

Always try to write at least 2 sentences for each bullet-point. You can develop a point by adding extra ideas or by expanding one idea to contain a lot of detail.

The essays are marked for two things: the content and the language. Examiners first read for the content, checking off the coverage of the bullet-points, then read again to examine the language in more detail, looking for accuracy and range. It is possible to get a high content mark with a low language mark and vice versa.

~~De~~ ~~de~~ Por lo tanto, sería mejor si ^{usáis} ~~usais~~ los sistemas por más de una hora cada día. ~~Esto~~ Esto reduciré la posibilidad de ~~de~~ la depresión, y ~~permitirá~~ aumentaré ~~tus~~ niveles de feliz. Si ~~en~~ ~~piensas~~ pensáis que ~~este~~ no es posible, ayudáis sus amigos, trabajáis con otros, y no sería difícil. Hay folletos en colegios, y consejo ^{gratis} a Internet, ~~que está en~~ También ~~es~~ posible que habléis con miigo.



ResultsPlus Examiner Comments

In this example, the final point has been made very well. Lots of advice has been given and is understandable, but the language is very flawed. This candidate was awarded 14 for content, but 8 for language, thus rewarding the understanding of the question and the imagination of the answer, but acknowledging that the language is only about half right.

Paper summary

All candidates found some questions they could answer but only the more able were able to gain high marks in all questions. The essay, in particular, produced some very varied and entertaining responses, with almost every candidate having plenty to say on the topic of mobile phones and MP3s with headphones. It appeared as though most candidates kept track of the time and were able to complete the whole paper within the two and a half hours allowed.

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