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Examiners' Report Principal Examiner Feedback

January 2018

Pearson Edexcel International Advanced
Subsidiary in Spanish (WSP01) Paper 1 Spoken
Expression and Response

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The assessment for this unit is divided into two sections – A and B and lasts between 8-10 minutes.

In Section A, candidates are required to respond to four Edexcel-set questions on a stimulus related to a candidate's chosen general topic area. The first two questions relate directly to the content of the stimulus card and the second two questions invite the candidate to give opinions and react to the general topic of the stimulus.

In Section B the Teacher/Examiner is required to engage the candidates in a discussion which, although relating to the same general topic area and its linked sub-topics, moves away from the main focus of the stimulus.

Assessment Principles

The test is assessed positively out of a mark of 40 using the marking criteria given in the mark scheme and printed in the specification:

- Quality of language (Accuracy) 5 marks,
- Quality of language (Range) 5 marks,
- Spontaneity and development 16 marks,
- Understanding (stimulus specific) 4 marks,
- Knowledge and understanding (General Topic Area) 10 marks.

Candidates' Responses

The majority of candidates responded to the demands of the examination and had a good understanding of the requirements. Most performed very well and some discussions were excellent. The highest achieving candidates had clearly carried out research into the General Topic Area (GTA) and referred to their findings in their discussions. They spoke with confidence and demonstrated a clear understanding of their chosen GTA.

In order to succeed in this unit, candidates must prepare thoroughly for the test as well as demonstrate a sound knowledge of language appropriate to AS Level. Centres should be aware that success in this test is also determined in part by outcome. The teacher examiner's approach to questioning during the test is crucial. Details of the most advantageous styles of questioning and teacher-candidate interaction are provided in the sections below.

Section A

Many students prepared their stimulus cards well and demonstrated an understanding of the content of the stimulus text in their answers to the first two questions in Section A. Students should be encouraged to listen carefully to the questions and to give as much relevant detail as possible, using their own words.

Questions 1 and 2

In some instances, students did not provide all the information from the stimulus texts required for Questions 1 and 2. In such instances, they were not able to

achieve the full 4 marks available for this section of the task which requires "*full and detailed answers*" to questions. In the most successful answers, students were able to use their own words or manipulate the language of the stimulus to provide at least three key relevant pieces of information from the text. The best answers demonstrated a precise understanding of the questions and students were able to select the appropriate information, explain, develop and justify their responses.

Some candidates made the mistake of giving irrelevant personal opinions and examples in response to Questions 1 and 2. Any information given by candidates in answer to Questions 1 and 2 that is not taken from the stimulus gains no credit. Questions 1 and 2 are designed to allow candidates to demonstrate their understanding of the stimulus and therefore, only information from the text can be rewarded.

Questions 3 and 4

The best performances gave fully developed answers that responded precisely to the set questions and demonstrated an understanding of their wider implications. Students should listen carefully and avoid giving answers that are not fully relevant to the questions.

The teacher examiner's role in Section A

Most teacher examiners read all four questions including the "*¿Por qué (no)?*", as required, without deviating from the wording in the Instructions to teacher/examiners. Some Examiners noted the addition of occasional extra questions and prompts in Section A. Teachers should be aware that these responses will be ignored by Examiners.

In an effort to encourage students to develop their responses in Section A, some teacher examiners waited in silence for students to add further points to their answers. Such an approach should be avoided as over-long responses in Section A often stray away from the question and limit the time available for spontaneous discussion in Section B.

Stimulus cards chosen by candidates

All stimulus cards proved accessible to all candidates and most demonstrated a good understanding of their content. The majority of candidates had been well-prepared and were able to introduce their answers with phrases such as "*Según el primer párrafo*", "*Según el texto*", "*el texto (nos) dice que*", "*Se menciona que*" etc.

Candidates should be given a free choice to suit their learning, strengths and interests. The two most popular topics were Youth Matters and Lifestyle, Health and Fitness. Environment and Travel and Education and Employment were also popular topics and all cards generated a wide range of points of view and interesting discussions.

Youth matters: Examiners commented that the majority of candidates who chose this topic did not demonstrate sufficient evidence of research and

knowledge. They tended to give opinions that were mainly generalised and lacking in detail. The strongest performances were able to provide detail, information and show evidence of research beyond day-to-day personal experience.

Lifestyle, Health and Fitness also produced some discussions that did not demonstrate a great deal of knowledge, tending to be based on personal experiences and habits. The best discussions on this topic explored issues where an understanding of the issues relating to the general topic area can be demonstrated.

Environment and Travel provides an opportunity for demonstrating a wide range of vocabulary and issues which can lead to interesting and varied conversations for the candidate and teacher/examiner. Many candidates who chose either Environment and Travel or Education and Employment were able to demonstrate that they had carried out extra research and learned specific vocabulary.

Education and Employment provides excellent opportunities for comparisons between different types of schools, education systems and countries especially for the more able and international students. Candidates who chose this topic tended to have strong views, which made for interesting discussions.

Examiners' comments related to the stimulus cards

1. Youth Matters

Stimulus Cards 1A and 1B

This was a popular card and most candidates successfully extracted the relevant information.

Perhaps because it was such a familiar topic, and one on which candidates do have personal opinions, there were several instances of answers not related to the stimulus text for Questions 1 and 2.

Q1) Some candidates gave the simple and obvious response "*Lo principal es vestir a la última moda*" and failed to look more closely at the first paragraph in order to find the other two required points, that young people are also influenced in their principles and are concerned about how clothing is produced. The following example of a good answer has been transcribed by the Examiner:

"Está claro que los adolescentes hoy en día dan mucha importancia a su forma de vestir y que la ropa que llevan no sea vieja, pero hay que tener en cuenta que todo lo que llevamos ha tenido que ser fabricado en algún lado, y la manera en que se ha producido la ropa es importante para los jóvenes".

Q2) Most candidates understood that the number of clothing companies that produce in an ethical and sustainable way is on the increase. Some candidates did not manage to extract the further points that companies operating in Spain take care of the environment and employees' working conditions. An example of

a good answer in the candidate's own words:

"El número de marcas que se preocupan de la calidad y la manera en que se manufactura su ropa ha incrementado en los últimos años. Principalmente, las empresas que cuidan de la naturaleza y, por supuesto, el estado de los sitios de trabajo en los que se hace la ropa, se sitúan en España."

Q3a) Most candidates answered that ethical fashion is important. Candidates often picked up on the idea in the text about working conditions and said that they would not buy clothing that was produced by exploiting workers or using child labour.

Q4a) Opinions were varied on this question. Many candidates commented that designer clothing is not important, whilst others said that it is very important and has a positive effect on relationships, self-esteem and social life.

Q3b) Produced similar answers to 3a, but a number of candidates said that young people do not think about the consequences of clothing production because the look and being fashionable is their main concern.

Q4b) Opinions on this question were divided. Some candidates said that wearing the latest fashions is essential, whilst others said that it is an individual's style and personality that is most important.

2. Youth Matters

Stimulus Cards 2A and 2B "El síndrome del nido vacío"

Examples of manipulation:

This card produced some detailed and mature responses. Some candidates struggled to find points of information that were embedded in the text.

Q1) Many candidates successfully explained that, in the past, it was uncommon for young Spaniards to move away from home before getting married and establishing their own lives. Some candidates missed the point that the need to find work now means that some young Spaniards are leaving home at an earlier age. An example of a good response:

"El primer párrafo nos cuenta que en la comunidad española, los jóvenes se quedaban cerca de casa para vivir o hacer sus estudios. Solo salían para formar su propia familia o contraer matrimonio. No obstante, la posibilidad de encontrar trabajo ha disminuido bastante, entonces tienden a emanciparse más pronto".

Q2) Produced detailed answers with most candidates understanding the changes in family life and how parents feel. A good example in the candidate's words:

"Cuando llegan a volar del nido, suele afectar más a la madre que se siente muy sola. El cambio de no tener que estar pendiente de cuando vuelven a casa y no poder charlar cuando quieran les hace muy triste."

Q3a) Most candidates commented that young people gain in self-confidence and independence when they leave home and have to manage their own lives.

Q4a) Candidates mentioned the need for young people to make their own choices and decisions and to have the freedom to develop their independence, whilst still retaining the support of parents and extended family.

Q3b) Produced a range of answers, the most common being that a suitable age to leave home is around 18-20 years old when the individual starts working or going to university.

Q4b) Candidates were able to discuss the practicalities of independent living and felt that knowing how to deal with problems and having to pay bills were the most difficult factors in living away from home.

1. Lifestyle, Health and Fitness

Stimulus Cards 1A and 1B "La importancia del desayuno para los niños"

Q1) Candidates were able to identify the three key points with little difficulty. The following is an example of a good answer transcribed in the candidate's words:

"La primera comida del día es imprescindible para el crecimiento saludable de los jóvenes. Por tomar el desayuno, los niños estarán llenos de ganas y de energía, y de esta manera podrán mejorar el rendimiento a la hora de estudiar"

Q2) The majority of candidates understood that children should have a light supper and go to bed early. The third point (that they have a good appetite if they have not eaten for many hours since supper the previous evening) was sometimes missed. A good example transcribed in the candidate's own words:

"Según una dietista, para que se pueda ingerir un buen desayuno, es importante cenar la noche anterior relativamente poco y además dormir aproximadamente once horas y de esta manera, los niños tendrán un apetito bastante grande por la mañana".

Q3a) A popular answer was that many young people simply do not have time for breakfast in the morning. Some candidates said that young people miss breakfast because they think it will help them to lose weight.

Q4a) Candidates picked up on the idea in the text that a healthy diet enables a young person to perform well at school and extended the point to say that provides energy for all activities and helps the growth of strong bodies.

Q3b) Candidates mentioned that many young people prefer fast-food options and that few families have time to prepare food and to sit down to eat together

during the week.

Q4b) Produced mixed responses. On the whole, candidates felt that young people do not pay sufficient attention to eating healthily, again mentioning the convenience of fast food and high intake of fat, sugar. Many candidates mentioned the problem of obesity.

2. Lifestyle, Health and Fitness

Stimulus Cards 2A and 2B "El polo en Argentina"

Q1) Most candidates were able to explain the attractions of playing polo. The best answers correctly identified all the factors (accessibility, contact with horses, adrenalin, friendships on and off the polo field). Some candidates failed to explain the last point. A full and detailed answer in the candidate's own words:

"Según el primer párrafo, el polo en Argentina es un deporte muy practicado ya que hay una gran variedad de canchas, para cualquier persona, y que son gratuitas. Para los amantes de los caballos, este deporte da mucho placer ya que transmite la adrenalina del juego y el jugador se siente unido con el animal. También este deporte es para practicarlo con un equipo y los jugadores forman amistades dentro y fuera de la cancha."

Q2) Most explained correctly that polo is not considered a "sport of kings" in Argentina and is widely accessible to all which means that the sport is more popular than in other countries. An example of a good answer:

"El propietario de un club en Argentina dice que, en otras partes del mundo, el polo es llamado "el deporte de los monarcas", pero en Argentina es barato para todos y por eso es bastante practicado y se juega más que en otros países ya que es tan fácil jugarlo".

Q3a) Some candidates interpreted this question as being about polo, rather than sport in general. Answers that considered opportunities to play polo were acceptable.

Q4a) Candidates mentioned many benefits, for example, the release of stress, building self-confidence, ability to focus and work in a team.

Q3b) Many said they felt that young people did not do enough sport, leading sedentary lifestyles, studying and using computers. They mentioned the need to include more sport in the school curriculum.

Q4b) Most mentioned making sport compulsory as well as publicising the benefits of sport through social media and using popular role-models to promote physical activity.

1. Environment and travel

Stimulus Cards 1A and 1B "Calles peligrosas en Madrid"

Q1) A common mistake was to omit the point the phenomenon was produced when it rains after a long period of hot, dry weather. An example of a good answer in the candidate's own words:

"Según el primer párrafo, tras varios días soleados de calor muy intenso, Madrid recibió chaparrones de agua, el martes pasado. Debido a este cambio de tiempo, las calles ahora están cubiertas en una extraña sustancia blanca que se parece al jabón".

Q2) Most candidates coped well, understanding that roads become slippery when it rains often substituting "resbaladizas" with "peligrosas". Some candidates were not able to explain fully that the dangerous conditions are caused by rain after a long, hot and dry spell. A good example in the candidate's own words:

"La capa de espuma que ahora está llenando las calles se puede considerar un peligro, porque puede hacer que los vehículos que pasan por encima se resbalen, y por eso el Ayuntamiento ha tenido que advertir a los conductores. El texto dice que es el aceite y otras sustancias de las coches en las carreteras que forma la espuma cuando llueve.

Q3a) Answers included car care, respecting speed limits, avoiding alcohol.

Q4a) The majority of candidates said that people are extremely dependent on cars and developed their answers to bring in the impact of cars on the environment or suggested means to reduce the use of cars.

Q3b) Candidates were able to talk about the speed, convenience, privacy of travel by car.

Q4b) Candidates suggested schemes to reduce car use and promote public transport.

2. Environment and travel

Stimulus Cards 2A and 2B "La contaminación del aire en Latinoamérica"

Q1) The majority of candidates successfully identified the required information and explained the concerns about air pollution in Latin America. Some did not mention the point that the levels of air pollution are above those recommended by the World Health Organisation. An example of a good answer in the candidate's own words:

"Como nos dice el primer párrafo, en las grandes ciudades de Latinoamérica, la polución del aire es un grave problema y unas cien millones de personas respiran un aire muy contaminado y esto supera al nivel que recomienda la Organización Mundial de la Salud".

Q2) In this question, most candidates had no difficulty identifying the health risks presented by air pollution. A good answer in the candidate's own words:

"Los expertos de la organización "Inspiração" han comentado que las

enfermedades pulmonares como el bronquitis están aumentando en los niños que viven en grandes ciudades. Además, las mujeres expuestas a estos gases, tienen bebés muy pequeños que pesan poco”.

Q3a) Several candidates mentioned poor air quality in large cities, whilst others said that they were fortunate to live in areas where the air is clean.

Q4a) There were examples of interesting responses which mentioned the destruction of forests, the palm oil industry, electric cars and schemes to encourage bicycle use in cities.

Q3b) There were few reported uses of this card, but interesting responses included mentions of rubbish in cities and the effect of plastic on the environment.

Q4b) Candidates thought that governments and individuals both have a role to play in reducing contamination. There were suggestions of actions that individuals can take to recycle and use less energy.

1. Education and employment

Stimulus Cards 1A and 1B "Programa de voluntariado en Costa Rica"

Q1) Candidates were able to describe the role of the volunteers and there were examples of full and detailed answers. An example of a good answer transcribed in the candidate's own words:

"El primer párrafo nos explica que los voluntarios se dedican a proteger diferentes tipos de tortuga que corren peligro de extinguirse, mediante la recogida de basuras en la playa, vigilancias nocturnas, o búsquedas de un hábitat y tienen que contar los huevos, y hay una cierta posibilidad de que trabajen por la noche”.

Q2) The majority of candidates taking this card were able to explain in detail the experiences that volunteers would have. A good example in the candidate's own words:

"Según lo que he podido leer en el segundo párrafo, el hospedaje se realiza en cabañas pequeñas en una reserva natural denominada "Tortuguero". La conexión a internet puede ser limitada pero hay una posibilidad de adquirir datos móviles del país, y mientras tanto, se puede apreciar el paisaje, organizar diferentes actividades deportivas y de exploración”.

Q3a) Good responses included learning languages, experiencing different cultures, independence, self-confidence, practical skills, skills that lead to employment.

Q4a) Candidates mentioned a variety of positive impacts that volunteer work can have.

Q3b) Answers were similar to 3a. Appreciating home and gaining a broader

perspective on one's home country were also mentioned.

Q4b) Dangers such as illness, theft of belongings and travel to violent areas were mentioned as possible risks.

2. Education and employment

Stimulus Cards 2A and 2B "Programa de voluntariado en Costa Rica"

Question 1: Most candidates taking this card were able to give a full and detailed answer. Below is an example of a good response transcribed in the candidate's own words:

"El primer párrafo nos dice que las huelgas de los padres en España no son muy normales y la que se realiza en noviembre es la primera que se hace. Se les ha recomendado a los padres los cuales tienen hijos en las escuelas públicas que empiecen la huelga contra los deberes esta misma semana. Los padres han dicho que sus hijos no van a hacer las tareas durante todos los fines de semana de noviembre".

Q2) Candidates understood the main points and explained them well. Here is an example of a good answer transcribed in the candidate's own words:

"Según el artículo, en contra de los deberes es que les quita el tiempo a los hijos de estar con sus familias y es algo que los padres no quieren, porque creen que sus hijos deberían dedicar más tiempo a la diversión y a jugar. Además los padres quieren que hagan más actividades creativas y culturales y no hay tiempo con tantos deberes".

Q3a) Answers generally agreed that homework helps learning. Reasons given were, time to ensure that material learned in class has been fully understood, going over topics at your own pace, practicing techniques.

Q4a) A number of candidates spoke positively about their experiences, saying that they valued an approach that develops the whole person rather than focusing solely on academic learning.

Q3b) Candidates commented that parents could help children with homework by talking about it, taking an interest, making sure that quiet time and space is available, supporting children when they are in trouble with teachers over difficult homework.

Q4b) Candidates were unanimous in the view that extra-curricular activities are important, that they boost learning, provide enjoyment and release from the burden of academic work and help young people to realise their potential.

Section B

Teacher examiners asked a wide range of challenging and thought-provoking questions which, in many cases, stimulated excellent discussions. A small selection of the many interesting questions on each topic are given below.

Teachers are urged to listen to the student and **react** to what he or she is saying. The mark scheme mentions "discourse" (i.e. discussion) and this entails a naturally developed dialogue between two people who should interact and respond to one another. In some tests, the teacher examiner did not pick up on the student's points. In such cases, the student would not be able to access the full range of marks available for Spontaneity and Development.

Some teacher examiners introduce too many topics. Candidates then have little opportunity to develop their ideas and opinions and to demonstrate knowledge and understanding. They would, therefore, not score high marks Spontaneity and Development or in Knowledge and Understanding.

It was pleasing to note that in most cases candidates' responses were spontaneous and not pre-rehearsed or recited. Spontaneity and Development are positively rewarded at iAS Level. In a few cases the tests/conversations did not sound natural and it was clear that candidates had learnt the tests by heart. This is clearly not in the spirit of the examination and will affect the marks awarded for Spontaneity and Development.

A selection of questions that prompted interesting discussions:

Youth Matters

- ¿Cómo han cambiado los modelos de familia en los últimos 50 años?
- ¿De dónde viene la identidad de una persona?
- ¿Se puede clasificar a las personas según su manera de vestir?
- ¿Crees que los videojuegos son buenos o malos?
- ¿Podrían los artilugios de las nuevas tecnologías volverse en nuestra contra?
- ¿Qué obligación moral tienen las personas públicas y los famosos?

Lifestyle, Health and Fitness

- ¿El fútbol es un deporte o un negocio?
- ¿Qué efecto tiene la publicidad en la alimentación?
- ¿Qué opinas del dopaje en el deporte?
- ¿Qué opinas de la medicina alternativa?
- ¿Cuáles problemas sociales se pueden encontrar en las ciudades?
- ¿Qué busca la gente que se muda al campo?

Environment and Travel

- ¿Debería estar la naturaleza al servicio del hombre?
- ¿La caza de animales debería estar prohibido?
- ¿Cómo crees que está influyendo el transporte en el medio ambiente?
- ¿Qué es el futuro del coche en tu opinión?
- ¿Cuáles factores influyen en la elección de las vacaciones?
- ¿Crees que las aerolíneas de bajo coste tienen un impacto positivo o negativo en una región?

Education and Employment

- ¿Qué ventajas ofrece la educación bilingüe?
- ¿Por qué no tienen éxito algunos estudiantes?
- ¿La educación es la responsabilidad del colegio o de los padres?
- ¿Qué profesiones deberían ser altamente remunerados?
- ¿Es mejor escoger una carrera que te agrade o una que te pueda conseguir un

buen sueldo?

¿Cuales son las cualidades ideales para un trabajador en nuestra época?

Knowledge and understanding of General Topic Area

The mark scheme rewards the quality of ideas and opinions candidates are able to express on their chosen GTA. Candidates were able to access the top mark band of 9-10 for Knowledge and Understanding only if they were able to demonstrate "*excellent knowledge and understanding*". Candidates who were able to use topic-specific vocabulary and demonstrate reading, research and detailed knowledge of the GTA were awarded high marks on this grid.

Teachers should take care to ensure that the discussion relates to the General Topic Area. For instance, there is some cross-over between Youth Matters and Lifestyle, Health and Fitness and Education and employment. If the sub-topic of Technology and Communication is discussed under Youth Matters, for example, teachers should focus their questions on the impact of technology on day to day life, rather than health issues related to the use of technology. Similarly, under the topic of Education and Employment, any discussion of technology should relate to its use in the context of that GTA. Teachers should not ask the same or similar questions to each candidate.

Examples of incorrectly conducted exams

In some tests, the discussion in Section B did not move away from the sub-topic of the stimulus card. In others, the majority of the discussion was on the same topic as the stimulus with only one or two questions on the GTA. In such cases, the candidate would not be able to access the full range of marks available for Knowledge and Understanding.

Centre performance including administration

Examiners have reported that most examinations were carried out in accordance with the requirements outlined in the Instructions to teacher/examiners booklet.

A few centres did not use the interactive OR1 forms, sending materials by post to the examiners.

Centres should check the quality of sound recordings. In some cases there was distortion on the audio files that made it difficult for examiners to hear what students said.

The timing of orals was generally accurate. Centres should note that it is not necessary to record the preparation time.

Centres are reminded that it is essential to follow the order of cards supplied in the randomisation grid. The purpose of the grid is to ensure fairness to all candidates and to avoid breaches in confidentiality and to ensure no candidate gains an advantage over his or her peers.

Centres are asked to read the comments and feedback written by Examiners on their OR1 Oral forms when they are returned, as it is hoped that they will

provide constructive feedback on the conduct of the tests.

Quality of language

There were many fluent excellent performances. A high number of students used a wide range of appropriate vocabulary and structures enabling them to access the full range of marks for Quality of Language both in Range and Accuracy.

Where varied and topic-specific vocabulary was used, candidates gained credit under Quality of Language (Range).

Common linguistic errors

Many students spoke highly accurately and with few errors, however the following errors were noted:

- Failure to use the subjunctive correctly

