

CARIBBEAN EXAMINATIONS COUNCIL

**REPORT ON CANDIDATES' WORK IN THE
CARIBBEAN ADVANCED PROFICIENCY EXAMINATION
MAY/JUNE 2008**

**SPANISH
(REGION EXCLUDING TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO)**

SPANISH
CARIBBEAN ADVANCED PROFICIENCY EXAMINATION
MAY/JUNE 2008
DETAILED COMMENTS

UNIT 1

Paper 01 – Listening Comprehension

Section A – Short Selections

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 with candidates' experiences in this age range. Although some questions in the Listening Component of the exam were well handled, there are still areas which proved challenging for candidates and which they need to address urgently.

Selection 1

This selection dealt with a young but famous Mexican bullfighter, Rafael Mirabal who captivated his audience from his very first public appearance in Plaza Monumental. Generally speaking, this selection was not done as well as one would have hoped. The mean score out of a possible twelve marks was six, although there were a few candidates who nevertheless secured perfect scores or at least managed to reach the upper ranges of at least ten or eleven marks.

In part (a), many candidates were able to give Rafael's age of nine years correctly. There were a few cases however where "*nueve*" was mistaken for 19 or 99 or 90.

In part (b), Rafael was famous for being the youngest bullfighter in Mexico. However, many candidates lost a mark where "*matador*" was translated as killer. Others even equated Rafael to being a murderer, a chef and even a novelist in some instances.

The response to part (c), was that Rafael was "discovered" in a bullfighting school in the centre of Mexico. Many candidates were able to provide a partial answer to the question. Others gave answers which included school of "*torero*" or a school in Torreo.

In part (d), Rafael's love and dedication to the sport made him stand out in terms of his qualities. Several candidates misunderstood "*dedicación*" and so made education one of his qualities.

The response to part (e) was that his career began at age seven and most candidates answered this item correctly.

Part (f), at Rafael's first public appearance, he received an ear for his success and captivated his audience. However, a very small minority of candidates seemed to have heard the word "*oreja*", which suggested a lack of cultural awareness on the part of the students. The general response was that he got a prize or an award.

Selection 2

This selection dealt with six British experts who seemed to have found the essential ingredients to happiness. Generally speaking, the performance on this selection was barely satisfactory with the majority of candidates scoring fewer than six marks out of a possible 12 marks.

In part (a), many candidates interpreted “*expertos británicos*” for “*expertos botánicos*”. Consequently, this spawned a series of totally irrelevant answers for the rest of the extract.

In part (b), several candidates were unclear as to what the claim was. They did not know what were the “*ingredientes esenciales*”.

With respect to part (c), the three-month duration of the experiment was not interpreted correctly. Many heard “*tres*”, but often went on to give incorrect answers such as “weeks” or “years”.

In part (d), the experiment was carried out in a typical British town. A satisfactory number of candidates were able to understand and answer appropriately.

In part (e), many candidates had the general idea, though not everyone answered fully to the question of successful strategies used in the experiment. The most popular response was taking care of a plant and smiling with strangers, whereas talking with a friend and not watching so much television were often misinterpreted or omitted.

Selection 3

This selection dealt with the Adjuntas community in Puerto Rico trying to fight against mineral exploitation as well as the destruction of the village through various types of pollution. This selection was quite well done, with several candidates scoring full marks or at least a solid passing grade. There were also a few cases, nonetheless, of no responses and low performance but these were not as evident for this item.

In part (a) (i) most candidates answered that Casa Pueblo was a community organization.

In part (a) (ii), with the exception of the no responses candidates, those who answered this item noted that it was located in Adjuntas or Puerto Rico.

Part (b) generally appropriate responses were given.

In part (c), the response proved to be a bit more challenging. Candidates tended to state that the threat posed to the community was to protect the environment or to fight against exploitation as opposed to the threat of the destruction of the village or pollution of land, air or rivers.

With respect to part (d), most of the answers provided were appropriate. In some cases, candidates incorrectly listed that two sectors which contributed to the community's success in 1995 were from among educational, church and government as opposed to religious, cultural, environmental and student.

Selection 4

This selection looked at the marine turtle's plight particularly in the Oaxaca area of Mexico.

The candidates' performance was generally unsatisfactory, with a general trend of no response to a minimum score of three marks of a possible eight. There were a few high flyers in the seven to eight marks category. Unfortunately, scores in this region were more of the exception rather than the norm.

In part (a), many candidates were able to mention correctly the number eighty as the amount of the particular species killed. However, several more were unclear as to what exactly the species were.

In part (b), most candidates were able to identify a beach in Mexico as the place where the species were killed.

However, in part (c) the responses were generally distorted. Several candidates were unclear as to why the species were killed. Consequently, examiners saw responses such as “people play on the beaches that turtles inhabit”; “species were killed because of people destroying the marine habitat”; “they were harmful to the marines”. Not many candidates seemed to have heard “*huevos*” in order to even remotely state that marine turtles' eggs are said to have aphrodisiac qualities.

In part (d), the promise made by the government which was to increase protection of the marine turtles, was only partially answered since many candidates failed to express the sense of the verb “*reforzar*” in order to give a complete response. Many just talked about protection.

In part (e), although several candidates recognised the word “*barcos*”, too many of them mistakenly thought that the boats were forbidden to go into the area, that persons were fined or that boats were banned from entering. The more acceptable response was that the Government sent two boats to Escobilla beach.

Selection 5

This selection made mention of meeting plans for World Environment Day - organized by the United Nations, and to be held in the United States on this particular occasion. This selection was answered fairly well by most candidates.

In part (a), most candidates answered this question correctly by stating that the UN program will take place in 30 Latin American cities.

In part (b), most candidates gave the acceptable response of Governments, citizens and non governmental agencies as who will be involved in these meetings.

In part (c), the aim of the meetings seemed to pose some difficulty to candidates. The quality of responses was mostly unsatisfactory. Sample responses included “they planned to develop the environmental situation” or “to plan strategies to take care of the mental state of the old”.

Most candidates responded correctly to part (d), indicating that World Environment Day is celebrated in a different city every year.

Part (e) of this question posed the greatest difficulty and there were several no responses. The importance of the meeting being held in the United States this year was mostly misinterpreted and so, examiners saw many cases of guesswork such as: “it is important to plan for the development of the environment”, “it is a memorandum on the start of the UN programme” or “The United States is a significant country”.

Section B – Extended Interview

Selection 6

Candidates performed satisfactorily on this question which had a mean score of nine out of a possible twenty-four with only eleven candidates scoring in the upper bands of the 21 - 24 range. The interview with Maribel Dominguez, a Mexican footballer, dealt with the topic of women in football.

PART 1

In part (a), many candidates were able to give reasons for Maribel's initial interest in football. Where candidates failed to gain the full three marks, it was mainly due to the omission of the fact that “she didn't have any one to play with, so she played with her brothers”.

In part (b), only a few candidates were able to state accurately the two tricks that she used in the beginning to be able to play on the team. These were to call herself Mario and her pretending to be a boy. Many candidates wrote about Maribel following in the footsteps of Ronaldinho or that she was a good goal keeper.

In part (c) (i), a significant portion of candidates were unable to state correctly the initial reaction of Maribel's mother to her playing football. This question was misinterpreted for the most part as was evidenced in the popular response that her mother believed or thought that football was a male sport as opposed to her being afraid that she would get kicked, hit or hurt.

With respect to part (c) (ii), there was further misinterpretation, in that candidates believed that Maribel's mother discouraged her from playing football by “feeding her with a lot of chicken” as opposed to hiding her football boots.

In part (d), many candidates simply stated that Maribel arrived at the competitive level by playing with men. The majority of responses for this item were insufficient and incomplete to warrant the full three marks.

PART 2

The response to how Maribel was treated differently by the men on her team, part (e), was answered vaguely at times by a few candidates. Several simply said that the men did not want to play with her.

In part (f), almost all candidates were able to attribute “*machismo*” as one of the main factors for men's negative reaction towards feminine football. However, many stopped at this explanation and did not elaborate in order to gain maximum marks for this question.

In part (g) (i), the answer to Maribel's secret to her success which was simply “a desire to excel” was often interchanged with answers more suitable for part (g) (ii). In other instances, candidates tended to construct their own interpretations.

In part (g) (ii), many candidates either restated the answer destined for part (g) (i), “a desire to excel”, as opposed to indicating that she achieved success by “always training harder to be one of the best”.

With respect to part (h), many candidates acknowledged correctly that Ronaldinho inspired her the most. However, there were several instances where Ronaldinho's skill and charisma (both on and off the field) were not highlighted when additional information was required.

In conclusion, students continue to need more practice in this area of language proficiency. There are still many instances where candidates are fabricating responses or providing answers based on common sense. Happily, there were only four candidates who did not attempt this section at all.

Paper 02 – Reading and Writing

Candidates' performance on this paper was good. Many candidates showed a good level of skill in the area of comprehension and many showed good control of the language.

Section A – Reading Comprehension

In this section of Paper 02, candidates were presented with two passages, both in Spanish and were required to respond to questions based on the material. For passage 1, candidates were asked to respond to the material in English to questions asked in English and for passage 2, candidates were asked to respond in Spanish in their own words, questions posed in Spanish.

Passage 1: *Las divorciadas se unen.*

This was a compulsory question which tested the candidates' ability to understand a passage in contemporary Spanish based on a topic of interest. Parts (a) – (f) for this passage required candidates to respond in English to questions asked in English. Parts (g) – (k) required candidates to provide synonyms taken from the passage to the items presented.

Overall, the passage was well understood with close to 40 per cent of candidates able to score in the 20 - 24 range and 80 per cent in the 15 - 24 range. Less than 15 per cent of candidates scored under twelve out of the possible twenty-four marks. The vocabulary of the passage was fairly well understood by the majority of candidates, evidenced by the level of accuracy in the responses given to the questions. However, there were some problems with specific phrases and expressions.

While the responses for part (a) were generally adequate, some candidates had problems with the number 15,000. Many candidates did not understand the Spanish equivalent to this number, because of the point (.). Some responses that were given were “15 per cent”, “15 couples” and “1500” couples. Some candidates also translated *parejas* as “birds”. Also, many candidates did not know the meaning of the word *casamiento* and incorrectly translated it to mean “housing” or “houses” and in quite a few instances, “buildings”.

Part (b) was quite well handled by the majority of candidates. Marks were lost in some instances, however, because of insufficient details taken from the passage. Part (c) was fairly well-answered, although there was a fair number of candidates who translated *ayuda psicológica* as “physiological” or “physical” help. Part (d) was also quite well understood although there were a few instances where candidates translated *deprimida* as “deprived”, rather than “depressed”.

Part (e) also was handled quite well by most candidates. Part (f) proved to be most problematic for candidates. Some of them translated the expression *desdramatización* as “desdramatization” and while many were able to say that “humour was used”, they were unable to state that it was used in the “improvisation sessions to overcome painful situations”.

The synonyms section of the questions was fairly well done with the majority of candidates being able to identify at least four out of the five synonyms. However, there were instances where candidates gave English translations for the expressions presented, and, in some cases, giving longer expressions than what were required. Candidates need to be reminded to read the instructions carefully for each section of questions and also to give only the phrase or expression that would be similar in meaning to that given.

Passage 2: *Cómo salvar a los mamíferos.*

This was a compulsory question testing the candidates' ability to understand the passage in the target language and to respond in Spanish in their own words, to questions asked in Spanish. Overall this passage was a bit more challenging for candidates than passage 1. Less than 15 per cent of candidates scored in the 20 - 24 range and just over 45 per cent scored in the 0 - 11 range.

It is to be noted that there was a fair attempt by many candidates to respond to questions in their own words, but there were a great number of instances where this was not the case. In some cases, wholesale lifting of answers from the passage was seen in all of the responses, especially in part (f) (ii), which required candidates to provide other measures of solving the problem outlined in the passage. Candidates are to be reminded that failure to observe the instruction of answering in one's own words is heavily penalized.

While the attempts to respond to questions in their own words were quite commendable, there were instances in which candidates experienced great difficulty in manipulating the language. There were many examples of poor grammar and use of many anglicisms. It is to be noted that in the marking of the Reading and Writing, grammar is not the focus. However, if the comprehension of responses is impeded because of grammar or vocabulary, candidates will be penalized.

There was also a small number of candidates who answered the questions in English, rather than the stipulated Spanish and these candidates were also penalized for disregarding the instructions. Candidates are asked to pay very special attention to the instructions that are given.

There were also instances where candidates did not identify the questions that they were answering. Some candidates did not use letters to indicate the question they were answering and in instances where questions had a part (i) and (ii), responses were given as a single answer. In other instances, candidates mislabeled their responses. Candidates are to be reminded that such oversights do have an impact on the marking process and marks can only be awarded to the identifiable responses.

While the majority of candidates were able to identify correctly the answer for part (a), the problem was that a great number of responses were taken directly from the passage, with little attempt to use “one’s own words.” For part (b) (i), many candidates seemed confused by the study carried out and said that scientists “*encontraron 5000 especies de animales en el mundo...*”, rather than “*utilizaron los mapas para ver la distribución de los mamíferos...*”

Part (b) (ii) was well understood, although there were some problems with direct copying of answers. Part (c) was quite well answered with most candidates giving all the relevant details from the passage. In part (d), (i) and (ii) were well handled by candidates, which was also the case for part (e).

Candidates also seemed to be confused in the answering of part (f) (i). The question asked for “*una decisión*” that needs to be taken. Many candidates ignored this and spoke about what needs to be done, for example “*se requiere colaboración ...*”, “*mover a las fuerzas...*” and failed to outline the decision. There was also a high level of plagiarizing of the final paragraph as an answer to this question.

There were some interesting answers provided for part (f) (ii). Candidates were able to write very specific answers for the problem. Candidates should be advised that lengthy answers are not necessary for this question; rather, succinct points are quite adequate. There continued to be the problem where some candidates did not understand the expression *además de lo mencionado*, and these candidates outlined the ways discussed in the passage.

Section B – Essays

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 analytical and logical manner related to the theme “*La Sociedad y Los Asuntos Sociales*” as outlined in Module 2 of the syllabus.

Examiners were looking for essays with –

- An introduction outlining the position taken by the candidate on the topic chosen
- Three to five paragraphs focusing on the various angles of the topic
- A brief conclusion summarizing the main points of the views expressed.

The candidates’ performance was judged by the way in which they were able to show organization and coverage of the topic, relevance and include facts, ideas and opinions. The correctness of expression was measured by how well the candidates were able to use a wide range of vocabulary and idioms as well as the accuracy of grammatical structures.

At this level, there was a high incidence of anglicisms, faulty grammar, and literal translations. Many of the essays presented showed evidence of an inability of candidates to write a structured, well planned essay.

Question 3

Las madres que trabajan fuera del hogar no pueden cuidar bien a sus hijos. Comenta.

This question was answered well and was clearly understood with the majority of candidates scoring above twelve marks. However, some who attempted this question failed to show the negative impact on children if they agreed with the statement. Some of those who disagreed did not give clear examples of how mothers managed to work and take care of their children.

Question 4

Los inmigrantes deben quedarse en sus propios países y trabajar para lograr su desarrollo. ¿Qué opinas?

Some candidates did not understand the difference between migration and immigration and therefore were not able to explain how immigrants can stay in their country to help its development. In some instances “*su desarrollo*” was taken as their personal development and not that of their country. However, overall performance was in the “satisfactory to good” range.

Question 5

El hogar, la escuela o la comunidad, ¿Cuál es más responsable de la violencia en la sociedad? Discute.

Clearly the most popular choice, many candidates made a fairly good attempt although there were those who fell short in their ability to develop their ideas and give examples.

Question 6

Los medios de comunicación pueden afectar la percepción que se tiene de un país. ¿Estás de acuerdo?

This question was not a popular choice. Many of the candidates who attempted this question were unable to define the role of the media and perhaps the expression “*se tiene*” may have been misunderstood. However, there were a few very good essays in which excellent examples were given of worldwide events where the media played an important role in the perception created for that country.

Question 7

La educación moral es la única forma de frenar la difusión del VIH y el SIDA. Discute.

This question was the least popular. The term “*educación moral*” was misunderstood and the verb “*frenar*” seemed to have caused a problem for some candidates.

The overall performance of the candidates was satisfactory.

Generally there was a high incidence of grammatical errors that reflected an overall weakness in very basic structures. There were at times prolific use of anglicisms and literal translations. There was a lack of structural organization in the essays and an obvious lack of appropriate vocabulary. Some notable errors are given below.

Errors in Grammar and Vocabulary

Ser / Estar
Pero / Sino
Más / muy
Un otro
Por que / porque
Agreement –subject/verb
Use of the passive
Use of the negative
Es necesita que
Use of the subjunctive

Errors in Expression

Salvar dinero
al corazon del problema
es verdaderamente se hacienda peor
formar fuerzos apoyos de red
attender escuelas
son no dan valores
un nuevo a cinco trabajo
la familia hace dysfunctional
no tontería debería soportado
en los días viejos

Every effort should be made to encourage the candidates to read widely and to master the grammatical structures, many of which are learnt in the first year of instruction. At this level, candidates must also be guided on how to approach and treat different types of essays.

Paper 03 – Literary Analysis and Themes**Section A - Literary Analysis**

This section required candidates to respond to one of four excerpts taken from the texts studied - Felices Días Tío Sergio, 17 narradoras latinoamericanas, Crónica de una muerte anunciada and La familia de Pascual Duarte. Candidates were required to analyze the extract and comment on character, plot, setting and simple literary techniques. This question was marked out of 16.

1. Felices Días Tío Sergio

Part (a) *¿Qué ocurre en este episodio?*

While most candidates understood that the passage referred to an attack on Andrés, few of them stated that the sister intervened.

Part (b) *¿Cómo se caracteriza la narradora?*

Clear adjectives were not always given. Many candidates gave lengthy explanations but often did not specify the trait they were describing.

Part (c) *Comenta el punto de vista narrativo del episodio.*

Candidates rarely used the term “*narradora protagonista*”. Most stated that first person narration was used but did not fully explain the function of this type of narrator.

Part (d) *Explica la emoción que resalta en las siguientes palabras:*

“[...] tiré una piedra, también [...] yo me acerqué con un palo a Chiquí, quería darle en la cara, quería, intensamente, verlo sangrar.”

Most candidates recognised the emotion rage/anger. There were some cases when candidates mentioned violence as a character trait and not an emotion. Candidates need to read questions carefully to ensure that they understand what is required.

2. 17 narradoras latinoamericanas

Part (a) *Relata la trama del episodio.*

This question was not always well answered since many candidates did not mention Analia's relationship with her son. Many candidates narrated the entire story rather than highlight the key elements of the plot.

Part (b) *Comenta el punto de vista narrativo del relato.*

Most candidates identified the narrator as third person but did not mention anything about the omniscient narration.

Part (c) *¿Cuáles son DOS adjetivos que describen la personalidad de Analia? Justifica tu respuesta.*

Some candidates answered this question very well with specific adjectives and support. Most responses were adequate but candidates must be mindful of the need to support their responses with quotations or illustrations from the text.

Part (d) *Explica el cambio de emociones que experimenta Analia por lo largo del relato.*

This was generally well answered but a few candidates failed to show the changes in the emotion of the character.

3. Crónica de una muerte anunciada

Part (a) *¿De qué se trata el relato?*

Candidates were able to sufficiently respond that the passage described the house and showed preparations for the wedding and the family's traditions.

Part (b) *¿Qué tipo de narrador hay en el episodio? Justifica tu respuesta.*

Some candidates were confused about the type of narrator. Some indicated that it was first person narration while others pointed out it was third person. Few managed to point out that the narrator was a character in the novel. Explanations and support were not well justified.

Part (c) (i) *Explica estas palabras: "nuestras hijas se casan en nuestro chiquero o no se casan."*

(ii) *¿Qué se aprende de los padres Vicario de esas palabras?*

This was generally well answered with adequate support.

Part (d) *¿Cómo refleja este pasaje la situación socio-económica de la familia Vicario?*

The examples used by candidates to show support were not sufficient to demonstrate the family's socio-economic status.

4. La familia de Pascual Duarte

Part (a) *¿Qué tipo de narrador hay en este episodio? Justifica tu respuesta.*

Most candidates mentioned that the narrator is first person but did not state that he participated in the events of the novel.

- Part (b) (i) *¿Qué recurso literario se emplea con las palabras “La mujer que no llora es como la fuente que no mana”?*
 (ii) *¿Qué función tiene en el episodio?*

Most candidates were able to identify that a simile was used but many responses were lacking in proper explanation.

- Part (c) *¿Qué contraste hace el narrador entre él y su hermana por un lado y su madre por otro?*

Very poor responses were given in many cases. Where there was an attempt to describe the relationship between Pascual and his sister, there was little attempt at comparison between the two of them and their mother.

- Part (d) *¿Qué sentimiento resalta en este episodio? Explica.*

This was well answered generally, except that some explanations were too vague. More specific reasons were needed to show why hate existed.

Section B – Themes

Candidates were required to write one essay in English based on one of two themes – “La Juventud”, for which the prescribed texts were “*Felices días, tío Sergio*”, and 3 short stories from the collection “*17 Narradoras Latinoamericanas*”; as well as the theme of “El Individuo y la Sociedad”, with prescribed texts “*Cronica de una muerte anunciada*” and “*La familia de Pascual Duarte*”.

Candidates’ performance on this section of the exam follows:

- 6 per cent of candidates scored between 24-32
- 36.5 per cent of candidates scored between 16-23
- 50 per cent of candidates scored between 08-15
- 8 per cent of candidates scored between 00-07

Overall candidate performance was considered moderate to satisfactory.

Question No. 5 was chosen by 27.5 per cent of candidates.

Question No. 6 was chosen by 14.5 per cent

Question No. 7 was chosen by 31 per cent

Question No. 8 was chosen by 26.5 per cent

In 2007 the majority of candidates used the Theme “El individuo y la sociedad”, but this year there was a closer correspondence between the numbers using each theme.

Examiners were looking for well-structured, balanced essays, that is, a brief, relevant introduction, followed by 4-6 brief points/paragraphs supported by either short quotations in Spanish, from the novel or references to particular scenes/incidents, and then brought to closure by a brief conclusion, which was not simply a rehashing of the introduction.

The best essays followed this pattern with candidates showing familiarity with the content, characters and events of the novel, focusing on the main points of the question or referring to the question periodically, and showing not merely knowledge and comprehension, but the ability to apply same to the question through careful analysis, synthesis and their own evaluation/interpretation as it related to the question. The best essays also followed the rubric of the question in terms of word limit.

For Questions 5 and 6 candidates could have used either text, *Felices Días Tío Sergio* or *17 Narradoras* to answer either question, although it would have been difficult, if not impossible to refer to “*El primer beso*” to answer question 5. The quality of answers was very mixed. Approximately half of the responses scored sixteen and above.

Some candidates ‘re-worded’ question 5 so it became ‘Adults **do things** without thinking’ which tended to lead them astray and away from the main focus of the question.

The most popular question was number 7, (*Poverty is the major cause of problems for individuals in the society. Do you agree?*) chosen by 31 per cent of candidates. Again, the quality of answers was mixed, with approximately half scoring sixteen and above.

The text that would have been most appropriate for this question was ‘*La familia de Pascual Duarte*’. Good responses from candidates spoke to the effects of poverty, its outward signs and the links between it and other social problems, for example, marginalization, ignorance, aggression, violence, appropriate behaviour, a fatalistic belief that there is nothing an individual can do to change his/her destiny, also to a certain extent Pascual’s desire to justify his conduct, as if he had no choice other than to do the things he did. The weaker candidates tended to agree with the proposition in the essay title and were merely repetitive and lacking in balance.

A number of candidates used ‘*Crónica de una muerte anunciada*’ to answer this question, and so long as they bore in mind what the question was asking they were able to write a reasonable essay. However, if they agreed wholeheartedly with the question then they got themselves into difficulties. In ‘*Crónica de una muerte anunciada*’ poverty is only one of **many** issues that cause problems for individuals in that society. Yes, there is a grossly unequal distribution of wealth and resources, but candidates could have drawn attention to the outdated honour code, that can still be used to justify murder, a Church that is portrayed as a joke, widespread hypocrisy, double standards for men and women, exploitation of women and the poor, general immorality, violence and class conflict seething under the surface.

Question No. 8

(*Individuals always have their own selfish motives for rebelling against society. What is your opinion?*).

Most responses scored below sixteen marks, and it was felt that candidates generally were not clear in their minds as to what was meant by ‘selfish motives’ and ‘rebelling against society’, and that they would have given themselves an advantage if they had defined their terms early in their essay. While it is possible to see many examples of anti-social behaviour in ‘*La familia de Pascual Duarte*’, we can only infer Pascual’s motives because he is a walking contradiction, and as to whether his motives are selfish (and whose are not?), even he does not understand why he does things.

In ‘*Crónica de una muerte anunciada*’, although there are many social conventions that deserve to be rebelled against, generally no-one does. Maybe Angela Vicario, but then she never imagined that she would ever marry someone so far out of her social class as Bayardo San Roman, to whom loss of her virginity would be such a life or death issue. There is an almost unthinking acceptance of what should be socially indefensible, and as with all of his novels, García Márquez shows us a society that is so self-absorbed with the trivia of existence, that were it not so tragic it would be comic.

Comments and Recommendations

- Summarizing and story telling will not be rewarded. Examiners are already familiar with the texts and are looking for points that are relevant to the question and which show analysis and evaluation on the part of the candidate.

- It was clear from some scripts that candidates had relied heavily on a translation of the set text. In some cases there was even the suspicion that this may have been the text that candidates had taken into the exam. **In no way is this to be condoned or permitted.** If candidates cannot deal with the text in the original Spanish, then they have no right entering the exam.
- Candidates **must adhere to the word limit.** Some scripts were thousands of words long, and while they may have contained many valid and relevant points, examiners do not have the time to read beyond 450 words at the most. The tone of many essays was also too **informal**, and this also led to excessive use of words and produced an impression of deliberate padding and, to a certain extent, rambling.
- Poor handwriting and spelling continue to be problems and cause for great concern, especially with regards to the spelling of common words. Given that these essays are written in **English** this is cause for concern.
- Quotations should be short, relevant, **complete** and in Spanish. Candidates must avoid referring to the 1st 3 words and last 3 words of a quote, and citing page and edition. Also accuracy of quotes is vital. All a candidate has to do is copy from his/her text, so there is no excuse for inaccurate or mistake riddled quotes.
- We cannot overstate the importance of candidates thinking carefully before they commit themselves to a particular question and begin to write. In some cases, candidates used books related to one theme to answer a question on the other theme. Surely they knew during the course of the year that they were studying 'La Juventud', so why use the text for this theme to answer the question on 'El individuo y la sociedad'? and vice-versa?

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. 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 with candidates' experiences in this age range. Although some questions in the Listening Component of the exam were well handled, there are still areas which proved challenging for some candidates and which they need to address urgently.

Section A – Short Selections

Selection 1

Candidates performed creditably on this question with the majority scoring at least eight of a possible twelve marks.

The passage dealt with a guitarist with the Rolling Stones who was vacationing in Fiji, suffered an injury to his head and was taken to hospital as a precautionary measure.

The majority of the candidates easily identified Keith Richards as a guitarist with the Rolling Stones (part (a)).

In part (b) (i), most candidates accurately identified Fiji as the place where he was injured. The odd candidate misinterpreted the question and identified a part of the body instead, such as the head.

With respect to part (b) (ii), most candidates were able to explain that he was on vacation.

Although in part (c) most candidates were able to identify that he was taken to a hospital after his injury, the location of the hospital saw varying responses such as "Canada", "Ruwanda", and even "Yulanda" as opposed to "New Zealand".

Part (d) (i) was generally well answered. Some candidates offered "percussion", "contortions", "light convulsion" as possible answers instead of a slight concussion or even an injury to his head.

In part (d) (ii), there were varying responses to how his injuries occurred. Very few candidates were able to answer correctly that he fell from a palm tree but rather, made mention of "climbing Mount Fiji", falling off a stage or snow board", "skiing", or even that "one of the stones hit him in his head" to list but a few examples.

Although candidates answered part (e) quite reasonably, some of them thought that he was taken from his current location "for an operation", "to recuperate", "or to get away from the crowd", instead of as a precautionary measure.

Most candidates correctly answered that it was his upcoming world tour in which he was expected to participate.

Selection 2

This selection was not as well understood as selection 1. There were several areas of misinterpretations on the part of candidates.

This selection made mention of a controversy of a Spanish version of the U.S national anthem.

Many candidates did not know the cause of controversy, part (a), and provided responses such as:

- (i) A Spanish woman that speaks both Spanish and English
- (ii) A quarrel between the French and English in the USA
- (iii) Latin Americans migrating to the USA

For part (b), although many candidates recognised that the controversy had to do with the rights of the immigrants, there were more who thought that it had to do with:

- (i) Issues in Latin American music
- (ii) Similarity of instruments
- (iii) Use of many different instruments

With respect to part (c), quite a few candidates provided partial responses, as they did not manage to capture that the music was basically the same. However the better candidates did seem to grasp all of the details about the music. Almost everyone however, managed to score at least one mark for this item.

Part (d), proved to be very challenging. Candidates only grasped that the President saw no justification, but not much more than this.

In part (e), several candidates seemed not to realise that would-be US citizens would also have to learn English and sing the anthem in English as well. Many candidates only responded to the first part of the question.

Selection 3

Far too many candidates scored poorly on this question. Fifty-nine per cent of candidates scored between the zero and three range out of a possible eight marks.

This selection dealt with the issue of e-commerce.

In part (a), many candidates erroneously offered as a response to this item: "an electronics company"; "some commercial electronics"; "electronic business that sells electronics"; or "commercial electronics", as opposed to the type of company being advertised there as one dealing with e-commerce.

Although many candidates were able to score at least one mark in part (b), the majority of the responses suggested that they did not clearly understand the services offered by the company.

An array of incorrect responses was provided for part (c) to answer the question on what was said about the company's staff. Some of these responses included

- (i) they were friendly and knew a lot
- (ii) customers could ask them for assistance
- (iii) they have a rich knowledge in the field

Only a few were able to state that they have high credentials or that they were highly qualified.

In part (d), several candidates misinterpreted the reference made to the company's view on winning and gave answers such as:

- (i) win win or
- (ii) the company was not competitive and does not believe in winning

Selection 4

This question was quite well done with the mean being six out of a maximum nine marks.

This selection focused on Buenos Aires' success in the tourism sector.

Many candidates were unable to correctly identify the findings of the report, part (a). Many did not get the idea of "breaking historical records" and in fact provided answers such as:

- (i) Buenos Aires looks good from outside
- (ii) Buenos Aires has a good image.

Part (b) was very well answered in general. The majority of candidates correctly identified three attractions in Buenos Aires.

For part (c), while some candidates offered at least one correct reason for Buenos Aires' success, others were not able to capture the idea of it promoting the country outside of its borders.

Part (d) was another well answered question. Most candidates were able to give as positive results "the impact on economic activity" and "the creation of employment".

Selection 5

This question was well done by most candidates. The mean mark was five out of a maximum of seven.

The selection examined the topic of the increase in oil prices on the international market scene.

Candidates responded well to all of the questions asked on this selection. Part (b) proved to be most challenging to candidates and although performance was generally good, some candidates gave varying cities and even countries that were affected such as " Madrid", " Morrocco", U.S.A", and "England".

The main problem for part (d) was the fact that many candidates did not respond in the future tense in order to capture who will be the winners and losers.

Section B – Extended Interview

Selection 6

Selection 6 was an interview with Dr Manuel Arbeláez on the topic of alternative medicine. Candidates performed reasonably well on this question. The mean mark was twelve out of a possible twenty-four.

Responses to part (a) tended to be vague as many candidates ignored the "non" traditional/unscientific aspect and preferred to say that alternative medicine is based on traditional and scientific methods.

In part (b), there were some instances of misunderstanding of the question. Those who were somewhat misguided, tended to say that there were secondary effects, or, they only provided one factor to be considered when taking natural medicine into consideration. Expression tended to be the main problem here.

However, in part (c), most candidates were able to express why so many people believed in alternative medicine.

Again, candidates were able to correctly respond to part (d) on the three alleged benefits of alternative medicine. However, a few variations were listed such as: "sexual potential"; "singing", "heaches" and "arthritis".

Part (e) was easily answered as candidates had many options to choose from the extract.

On the other hand, part (f) tended to confuse candidates somewhat in terms of the numerical content. There were quite a few candidates who confused "fifty" with "fifteen" and "million" with "billion".

Very few candidates answered part (g) correctly. Most candidates were only able to convey what medical insurance companies were doing now, but failed to acknowledge what happened in the past.

In part (h), the majority of candidates were able to identify pressures brought on by politicians. Very few mentioned "lawyers" and in some cases, they only made references to politics or government rather than to politicians.

Paper 02 – Reading and Writing

Section A – Reading Comprehension

In the reading and writing section of Paper 02, candidates were presented with two passages, both in Spanish and were required to respond to questions based on the material. For passage 1, candidates were asked to respond to the material in English to questions asked in English. For passage 2, candidates were asked to respond in Spanish, in their own words, to questions posed in Spanish.

Passage 1: China “vende órganos” de presos

This was a compulsory question testing the candidates' ability to understand a passage in Spanish on a topic of interest. Questions and answers were in English. The responses to the questions for this passage proved that there was a fair level of comprehension of the material. The mean mark on this paper was twenty out of a possible twenty-four. The loss of marks was as a direct result of lapses in vocabulary.

For part (a), candidates were generally able to give correct responses, but some stated that “organ transplants were taken from prisoners” rather than “organs for transplants”.

There was almost universal success in the responses for part (b). There were some candidates who gave information from the passage that was irrelevant to the question. While there were no penalties for including additional information, candidates should be encouraged to give only relevant information in their responses.

Many candidates correctly responded to part (c), but there were some responses that showed that there was a misinterpretation of the word *ejecución*. This was translated by some as *injection* and *ejection*. Some candidates also failed to identify correctly the different parts of this question, answering both parts (i) and (ii) together. Candidates are to be reminded to correctly label each question and its different parts.

There was excellent level of responses to parts (d) and (e). However, a fair number of candidates understood *negocio* to mean *negotiation*. Also, many candidates referred to *foreign countries* rather than the *Western Hemisphere*.

In the section with the synonyms, candidates generally performed well. There were a couple of instances where candidates took entire phrases and, in some cases, an entire sentence as a synonym for the phrases provided. Candidates are to be warned to limit their responses to the phrases provided. Candidates are also asked to pay attention to the part of speech of the given words. Some candidates gave verbs as synonyms when adjectives were provided. An example of this was *escogidos*. Candidates gave *seleccionaron* as the synonym, rather than *seleccionados*.

Passage 2: Una nueva arca de Noé

This was a compulsory question testing the candidates’ ability to understand the passage in the target language and to respond in Spanish in their own words, to questions asked in Spanish. Overall, the candidates’ performance can be classified as fair in this section of the paper. Just over 15 per cent of total responses scored in the 20-24 band while approximately 30 per cent scored in the 15-19 band. Another 30 per cent, however scored in the 0-11 band.

Overall, there was a commendable effort by candidates to respond in their own words. However, there were still many responses that were taken directly from the passage. Candidates are to be reminded that there are penalties for disregarding the instructions of answering in one’s own words. There were also a number of instances of candidates responding in English to the questions. Though the responses that were given by these candidates showed very clear and accurate understanding of the passage, however, these candidates were also penalized for disregarding the clearly stated instructions.

The main challenge that faced candidates in part (a) was that far too many of them took the answers from the passage without any attempt to put into their own words. While there were some phrases and expressions found in the passage that were accepted in student’s responses, when it was found that entire sentences were copied, marks were deducted. This was especially the case for part (a).

Some candidates also had problems with part (b). Instead of explaining the project, many candidates merely identified it as “*un banco para guardar la información de los especies amenazadas*”. Candidates are asked to pay special attention to the marks awarded to each question and ensure that enough details are given in their responses in order to earn the maximum mark.

Part (c) was quite well understood, judging from the responses given. Although many candidates lifted their responses wholesale from the passage, most candidates who used their own words, did so successfully. There were a few candidates however, who failed to make the distinction between the durability of the *ADN en condiciones naturales* as opposed to *condiciones ideales*. This was an important distinction and therefore the responses that failed to mention it did not receive the total mark.

With respect to part (d), it appeared that many candidates did not understand the vocabulary from the paragraph. Many answers were copied from the passage, and the candidates who did attempt to respond showed that they did not understand the phrase *no descartan hacerlo en el futuro*.

Part (e) was also problematic for candidates.

There was also a high level of copying for part (f) (i). Many candidates simply copied the final paragraph of the passage, with no attempt to put any of the information in their own words. Again, it is important to remind candidates to be mindful of what the question asks. In the case of this question, candidates were asked to give details of the selected candidates and merely listing them would not have given the total mark.

Part (f) (ii) was an opinion question. This was quite well handled by most candidates. Responses showed that candidates took a clear position on the matter and were able to successfully justify their positions.

As for Unit 1, passage 2, there was a greater effort this year for candidates to put answers in their own words for this section of the paper. Candidates used a fair range of vocabulary to convey their answers. It must be pointed out, however, that there were problems with grammar and in some cases, vocabulary in these responses. While grammar and vocabulary are not the main focus in the marking exercise, responses that are unclear will be penalized. All candidates need to be reminded of the importance and answering in their own words and to ensure that they use the appropriate language in their responses.

Section B - Essays

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 for Unit 1, examiners were looking for essays which focused on the topic with the expectation that there would be a more mature and concise approach in the way the issues would be presented.

Candidates' performance was again judged by the **relevance** of the **content** to the specific topic, the **organization** and **coverage** of the facts, **ideas and opinions** including a **range of vocabulary and idioms** used as well **accuracy** of **grammatical structures** used.

At this level there was generally a better understanding of what was required. However there were still quite a few lapses with regards to sentence structure, grammatical and spelling errors.

Question 3

En el future cercano no podremos vivir si la computadora. Comenta.

This was the most popular question chosen and candidates who attempted this question handled the topic well.

Question 4

Vivir por medio de un sistema de respiración artificial no es vivir. ¿Estás de acuerdo?

This question was least popular. Many candidates misunderstood the question. Euthanasia was discussed for the most part. Students need to be trained to read and interpret questions correctly.

Question 5

Los avances en la producción alimentaria resultan más dañinos para la salud de los consumidores. ¿Qué opinas?

This question was generally well handled by candidates, with most of them scoring at least fifteen marks.

Question 6

Clonar es querer ser Dios. ¿Qué te parece?

Some essays showed a very clear understanding of what the question required and the topic was well treated. However, while many agreed with the statement, some were unable to support their point of view.

Question 7

Muchos avances tecnológicos pueden tener efectos adversos para la salud. ¿Estás de acuerdo?

This question was a very popular choice. Many candidates produced good to excellent essays. There were clear definitions of “avances tecnológicos” and “efectos adversos”. There were good supporting points and opinions expressed. However many candidates cited only the use of cell phones.

Although candidates for Unit 2 showed a greater understanding and interpretation of the questions posed, the inability to manipulate grammatical structures and show command of the language was evident. Few candidates showed mastery of the subjunctive and some essays were littered with incorrect spelling. Even though instances of incorrect spelling did not affect meaning, it is expected that at this level, written expression should be of a higher standard.

While some candidates used a wide range of vocabulary and expression, others lifted elements from other questions in the same section and tried to adapt the material to pad their essay. This resulted in some candidates digressing from the topic.

Notable errors in grammar and expression are given below.

Errors in Grammar

Ser / Estar

Use of *que* for *ese, esa*

Use of the subjunctive

Use of the Past Tense

Use of the negative (position)

Object pronouns (position)

Use of word, for example, *tecnológica/tecnológicos* as a noun

Errors in Expression

un otro/ cada otro

son crecimiento

no pueden tener una vez buena

There was rampant use of anglicisms and literal translation.

Apart from the proper use of the elements of grammar and appropriate vocabulary or idioms, it is obvious that students need to be taught the format of writing essays. Some essays were written in one paragraph.

Paper 03 - Literary Analysis and Themes

Section A - Literary Analysis

This section required candidates to respond to one of four excerpts taken from the texts studied. La lluvia amarilla, El llamo en llamas, El coronel no tiene quien le escriba and, Chombo. Candidates were required to describe and analyse character, plot, setting and simple literary techniques. They were also expected to display detailed knowledge of the structure and content of the text.

1. El coronel no tiene quien le escriba

- (a) *¿Qué importancia tiene la siguiente frase?*

<<Es una illusion que cuesta caro>>, dijo la mujer. <<Cuando se acabe el maíz, tendremos que alimentarlo con nuestros hígados>>.

Responses focused on the sacrifices that were made to maintain the rooster with very few candidates dealing with the question of the colonel's empty illusion.

- (b) (i) *Describe el punto de vista narrativo de este pasaje.*
(ii) *¿Qué efecto tiene en este episodio?*

Most candidates indicated that the narration was third person. Very few wrote that omniscient narration was used. Explanations were weak at times.

- (c) *Explica el significado del gallo en el contexto de la novela.*

Candidates mentioned hope with very few indicating the rooster represented faith also. Very few drew a link between the colonel and his dead son.

- (d) *¿Qué revela el pasaje de la personalidad del coronel?*

Characteristics about the colonel came from other parts of the novel. Candidates disregarded the part of the question that read "¿Qué revela el pasaje" and wrote about other aspects of the colonel's personality not reflected in the passage they were given to analyse.

2. Chombo

- (a) *Relata la trama del episodio*

Candidates generally related the story rather than give details about the plot.

- (b) *Describe el ambiente que predomina en el episodio.*

Candidates noted the tension/confrontation but explanations were poor.

- (c) *¿Qué diferencia es evidente entre la negra joven y Fulabata de sus diferentes maneras de hablar?*

Candidates' answers were one-sided as they focused on the young woman's speech and did not refer adequately to Fulabata.

- (d) (i) *Identifica el tema del episodio.*
(ii) *¿Cómo se relaciona al tema de la obra de donde se saca el episodio?*

There were not many substantial responses. Candidates identified the theme but did not refer adequately to the reflection of Antilleans as well as the other elements of discrimination in the novel.

3. El llano en llamas

- (a)
- Describe el punto de vista narrativo y el efecto que tiene.*

Well answered generally but few candidates mentioned that the narrator was omniscient.

- (b)
- ¿Qué se aprende del protagonista de este relato?*

Many candidates were unable to identify the basic facts about the protagonist regarding his imminent death. Most mentioned that he killed Don Lupe and his reason for doing so.

- (c)
- Comenta el tono del primer párrafo.*

Not well answered. Candidates' explanation of the tone was poor.

- (d)
- ¿Cómo se relaciona el tema de este relato con el resto del cuento "Diles que no me maten"?*

Few candidates identified the theme of the passage but referred to the theme of the text "rural life". There is the need to read the question with more attention to the key words used.

4. La lluvia amarilla

- (a)
- Comenta el punto de vista narrativo de este episodio.*

Candidates identified first person narration but only few mentioned that the narrator was the protagonist.

- (b)
- ¿Cómo se crea el ambiente del episodio?*

Candidates focused more on the physical environment/setting rather than the ambience.

- (c)
- ¿Por qué piensas que el protagonista decidió "andar en dirección contraria a la del humo" en vez de volver a casa?*

Not many candidates responded adequately. Candidates narrated the story rather than gave reasons for the actions of the character.

- (d)
- Comenta (i) La relación entre la perra y el protagonista
(ii) ¿cómo refleja esta relación, el tema de la novela?*

Comments and Recommendations

- Many candidates allowed their knowledge of the text to interfere with their analysis of the extract and presented references from the text in inappropriate circumstances.
- Teachers are reminded to give students sufficient practice in literary analysis (including identification of literary devices, narrative technique, narrative point of view, ambience/setting).
- Candidates should be able to justify their responses with references to the extract before them.
- These passages are not reading comprehension exercises and thus literary analysis is a requirement, not merely comprehension.

- There is the tendency among candidates to identify third person narrators as omniscient narrators, when this may not in fact be so. Candidates should be exposed to a variety of narrative technique over their course of study to better equip themselves with the skill in identifying these nuances in narration.
- 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

Candidates were required to answer questions on Two (2) Themes; “Conflictos políticos y sociales en Hispanoamérica”, for which the prescribed texts were *El coronel no tiene quien le escriba* and *Chombo*, as well as the theme of “La vida rural”, with prescribed texts *La lluvia amarilla* and *El llano en llamas*.

Candidates’ performance on this section follows:

- 8 per cent of candidates scored between 24-32
- 40 per cent of candidates scored between 16-23
- 48 per cent of candidates scored between 08-15
- 3.5 per cent of candidates scored between 00-07.

Question No. 5 was chosen by 9.5 per cent of candidates;

Question No. 6 was chosen by 24 per cent of candidates;

Question No. 7 was chosen by 23 per cent of candidates;

Question No. 8 was chosen by 43 per cent of candidates;

As for Unit 1, Examiners were looking for well-structured, relevant to the question, thoughtful and balanced essays.

The best candidates showed that they were well acquainted with the content, characters and events of the novel. They were focused on the main points of the question, and showed not merely knowledge and comprehension, but the ability to apply same to the question through careful analysis, synthesis and their own evaluation/interpretation.

Question 5

(Injustice in society has nothing to do with racism. It is simply a result of human nature. What is your opinion?) was chosen by 9.5 per cent of candidates and the quality of answers was mixed, with approximately half scoring at least sixteen marks. The number of scripts was small as this question related more to *Chombo*, which many schools may still not have accessed. Although the novel is out of print the author Carlos Guillermo Wilson has very kindly given us written permission to use it in photocopied form. A few candidates tried to use *El Coronel* to answer this question but got into difficulties as racism is not presented in this novel.

Question 6

(Most societal problems arise as a result of the adverse effects of political decisions. What is your reaction to this statement?) was chosen by 24 per cent of candidates and again the quality of answers was mixed, approximately half scoring at least sixteen marks. The better candidates were able to identify certain societal problems and link them to political decisions, while the weaker candidates simply produced a list of the problems.

“La vida rural” was the most popular theme and Question 7 was chosen by 23 per cent of candidates while Question 8 was chosen by 43 per cent. The text chosen was invariably *El llano en llamas*. Question 7 was quite well done, with the better candidates producing balanced essays, and referring to appropriate stories to support their points. It was felt that in a number of stories the beauties of nature were referred to, if briefly, but usually it was nature in its raw, uncontrollable state and often despoiled by Man. Some candidates only referred to the horrific side of nature – drought, floods, wind, fire, but we felt that this may have been because they had not studied enough of the book, as many candidates only referred to the **same** three or four stories.

The most popular question by far was number 8, (*The key to survival in a harsh environment is hope. Discuss this statement.*) Most candidates used *El llano en llamas*, but the use of the word ‘hope’ in the question opened the door for some students to use *El Coronel*, which worked quite well for them in this particular case. Candidates should remember, however, that questions on a particular theme should be answered using the prescribed text(s) for the given theme. Answers were generally good, as most candidates were able to identify the harsh environment and show how hope helped the characters survive. Many of the stories in “El llano” actually begin on a note of hope, which is then dashed as the story progresses. A number of candidates, however, chose stories that did not lend themselves to answering this question. And again the comment is made that perhaps they had not studied enough of the book to get the broad picture.

Comments and Recommendations

- Summarizing and story telling will not be rewarded. Examiners are already familiar with the texts.
- It was clear from some scripts that students had relied heavily on a translation of the set text, for example, ‘*The burning plain*’. In some cases there was even the suspicion that this may have been the text that candidates had taken into the exam. In no way is this to be condoned or permitted. If candidates cannot deal with the text in the original Spanish, then they have no right entering the exam.
- Candidates must adhere to the word limit. Some scripts were thousands of words long, and while they may have contained many valid and relevant points, examiners do not have the time to read beyond 450 words at the most.
- Candidates must be concise, succinct and to the point. Some introductions were extremely long, rambling, unnecessary and contained irrelevant material.
- Quotations should be short, relevant, **complete** and in Spanish. Candidates must avoid referring to the first three words and last three words of a quote, and citing page and edition. Also accuracy of quotes is vital. All a candidate has to do is copy from his/her text, so there is no excuse for inaccurate or mistake riddled quotes.
- Candidates must be familiar with the whole of *El llano en llamas*. While it contains 17 stories, many of them are very short.

Paper 04 - Internal Assessment

Units 1 and 2

Some of the recordings were too low and a few CDs were blank which made moderation difficult or impossible. There was some interaction between examiners and candidates; however, the latter should be encouraged to ask more questions. Some topics were interesting and detailed, while others need more research and organization of details. Most examiners provided positive reinforcement.

Examiners should remember to:

- ❖ introduce each candidate before each presentation;
- ❖ rewind tapes;
- ❖ not to use ½ marks;
- ❖ divide the total score in the three modules;
- ❖ to submit recordings of acceptable standard using standard-sized cassettes and not micro-cassettes;
- ❖ to speak loudly and clearly and encourage candidates to do the same;
- ❖ to ensure that the examination is free of background noise;
- ❖ submit only five samples and label them in the same order on the tapes and moderation sheets;
- ❖ try to adhere to stipulated time of examination;
- ❖ not to interrupt candidates during their presentations and let them do most of the talking;
- ❖ that written SBAs and visual aids are no longer part of the current syllabus.

Prepared Topic

Most candidates were prepared and made good presentations in a coherent and logical manner. It was evident that some research was done on some topics; however, some candidates need to do more research in order to make their topics more detailed and interesting. A few had difficulty with stress and pronunciation of certain words.

Topic Conversation

Many candidates handled this section fairly well while others who may have learnt their topics by rote were unable to respond appropriately to questions related to their topics. Many had difficulty because of limited vocabulary and expression.

General conversation

Many candidates performed well in this section as they felt more at ease and related better to topics related to everyday life. However, some were hindered by limited vocabulary and expression. Only a few candidates asked questions of the examiner. It must be noted that the pronunciation and stress of expressed by most candidates suggest that there is a need for more contact/interaction with native speakers.

Some Common Grammatical Errors:

- Ser/estar
- Ser with the gerund – soy estudiando
- Prepositions with the gerund – en hacienda
- Subject/verb agreement – la gente creen, las personas puedo
- Article/noun agreement – un gran cantidad, las paíes
- Noun/adjective agreement – muchas casos, otro gente
- Bien/bueno
- Haber/tener
- Omission of a/de – educar las personas, termino estudiar
- Omission of que – tengo estudiar
- Ambos/tanto...como...