

CARIBBEAN EXAMINATIONS COUNCIL

**REPORT ON CANDIDATES' WORK IN THE
CARIBBEAN ADVANCED PROFICIENCY EXAMINATION®**

MAY/JUNE 2012

SPANISH

GENERAL COMMENTS

While candidate performance declined in Unit 1 of the 2012 examination, there was improved performance in Unit 2, with an increase in the number of candidates at the highest grade.

DETAILED COMMENTS

UNIT 1

Paper 01 – Listening Comprehension

This paper assessed candidates' ability to respond in English to stimuli in Spanish, and covered topics from all three modules of the syllabus. Candidates were presented with five short selections and one extended interview in Spanish and were required to respond to questions based on the material in short-answer format.

The majority of candidates performed better in Section A than Section B. While it is evident that the listening component may be challenging at this level, there was a general weakness in English expression, which, in many cases, reflected a lack of thought in some of the responses. Far too many answers lacked logic and coherence and many had poor spelling. Several candidates did not complete the entire paper. Many of them relied on previous knowledge to respond to the questions instead of paying attention to specific details given in the selections.

Section A – Short Selections

The results were generally satisfactory. The majority of candidates completed the entire paper. However, some responses indicated that candidates needed to take greater care in responding to questions instead of translating.

A range of spelling errors and weaknesses in expression often posed challenges to examiners to determine the accuracy of responses. Additionally, vocabulary recognition was noted as a major shortcoming. Many candidates did not understand the following words: *mil*, *trece*, *psicológica*, *access*, *anticonceptivos*, *incertidumbre*, *noroeste*, *raíz*, *numerous* and *semillas*.

Selection 1

Performance on this selection, which looked at the excessive viewing of television by adolescents, was generally good.

While many candidates understood the major elements of the question and provided the correct response for Part (a) on the number of participants in the study, several of them misinterpreted *mil* as 'million'.

For Part (b), many candidates were able to correctly give the findings of the study. However, many of them misinterpreted *psicológica* as 'ecological'.

Most candidates got Part (c), on the ages of participants in the study, correct. However, the word *trece* was translated as 'three' or 'thirty' and some candidates even gave 'fifteen' as their response.

The majority of candidates gave the correct response for Part (d) (i). They knew the type of instrument that was used in the study. However, many unusual responses such as 'television' 'thermometer' 'guitar' 'survey' 'observation' were also given, the most common being 'television'.

For Part (d) (ii), on what the instrument examined, many candidates were unable to identify all three required components; only a few were able to identify the expressions ...*others in the same age group* or indicate that *hyperactivity* was part of the study. This resulted in many of them earning only two out of three marks.

The majority of candidates performed fairly well in Part (e), which asked for the recommendation of the study. However, many of them omitted the second part of the response. Instead of *psychological health* some gave 'health' or 'ecological health' as the answer.

Selection 2

Performance on this selection that examined some of the everyday issues in Spanish society, was unsatisfactory. The majority of candidates scored between five and seven out of a possible twelve marks.

In response to Part (a), the majority of candidates indicated the phenomenon that was noted in Spain in 2009. They were also able to provide the two main causes of the phenomenon, as required by Part (b). However, a few of them failed to provide a full response, but rather wrote 'economic or social factors/issues/problems'.

However, their response to Part (c), on other factors that have had an impact on the phenomenon, caused some difficulty for candidates. There were variations in the responses and many of them were incomplete. Among these incorrect responses was the misinterpretation of *anticonceptivos* to mean anti-contraceptives and 'consecutives'. Some candidates also misinterpreted *acceso* and gave 'excess contraceptives' as their response instead of *access to contraceptives*. Other incorrect responses were 'legislation against abortion' 'forced abortion' and 'women in the police force.'

Part (d) asked about the policies that are lacking in Spain. This was the worst answered question in this selection. Many of the candidates interpreted *la maternidad* to mean 'maternity leave' and many did not know the word *incertidumbre* and as a result lost marks.

Part (e) was well answered as the vast majority of candidates stated what was mentioned about foreign women. However, there were some unusual responses, for example, 'foreign women having a lot of children' and 'foreign women are coming to take away all the jobs'.

Selection 3

The performance on this selection, on measuring the demand on the earth's resources, was very good. However, quite a few candidates did not follow the given instructions and ticked more than four responses. This resulted in penalization.

Selection 4

Overall, this selection which looked at the discovery of plant fossils in Argentina, was generally not well done. At least half of the candidates scored four or fewer marks out of a possible eight.

Part (a) was fairly well done. Most candidates specified that the scientists who discovered the fossils were Argentinian. However, many candidates misspelt the word *Argentinian* and wrote 'Argentia' while a few wrote 'scientific Argentinians' and 'anglocientifico.'

Only a small number of candidates gave north-west of Argentina as the location of the discovery, for Part (b). The majority of candidates interpreted *noroeste* as ‘north-east’. Some simply stated ‘north’ or ‘east Argentina’.

Understanding numbers proved to be problematic for a number of candidates responding to Part (c), for which they had to state two characteristics. Not many candidates were able to state how old the plants were (472 million years). However, the majority correctly stated that they were *simple*. Unfortunately, many candidates provided the responses for Part (d) as their answer for Part (c) and described the plant fossils as ‘multicellular’ and ‘hepatic’, which they misspelt as ‘epatic’ ‘empatic’ and ‘empatetic.’ Some candidates also misinterpreted *raíz* as ‘rice’.

For Part (d), which asked about the origins of the fossilized plant spores, the responses were satisfactory. Many candidates gave the literal translation of *agua dulce* as ‘sweet water’ instead of *fresh water*. Nevertheless, marks were awarded for sweet water because it is a term used in a few Caribbean territories and was therefore accepted on cultural merit. Most candidates were able to state that they were multicellular and a few mentioned algae. However, some candidates also described it as a green water plant.

Selection 5

This selection, which was poorly done, looked at the challenges faced by the environment as a result of the introduction of certain agricultural ingredients.

Most candidates were able to answer Part (a) correctly. However, although they were able to mention the disadvantage of high-yielding crops, there were some incorrect responses mentioned. These included ‘nutrients are lacking’, ‘reduction of nutrients in the soil’, ‘destruction of nutrients’ and ‘minimal production of nutrients’.

Most candidates were able to identify at least one of two methods being used to increase the production of high-yielding crops, as asked in Part (b). The most popular response was ‘synthetic fertilizers’. Some candidates gave the response ‘synthetic materials and products’. Marks were awarded to candidates who gave the responses ‘artificial fertilization’ and ‘genetically modified or engineered seeds’. Many of the candidates were unable to comprehend the term *semillas híbridas* — *hybrid seeds*.

Many candidates also performed well on Part (c), which required them to state two adverse effects of this type of production on a person’s health. However, some candidates stated ‘death to babies’ and ‘miscarriages’ instead of *death during pregnancy*. Some also interpreted *retardo en el crecimiento* as ‘mental retardation’.

Part (d), how the problem can be solved, was poorly done with the majority of candidates writing ‘using fertilizers’, ‘eating healthy foods’ and ‘using local products’ as their response.

Section B – Extended Interview

Selection 6

The sixth selection was an interview with Ana Rodríguez about women in society. Performance was less than satisfactory. In this section especially, there were numerous weaknesses in expression, as well as a lack of logical and coherent responses.

Part 1

The vast majority of candidates were able to identify Ana Rodríguez' profession. Part (a). However, a few of them lost marks for the responses 'industrial worker', 'industrial worker in the petrol industry', 'body builder', 'police woman' and 'engineer.'

Part (b) was very well done. Almost all candidates responded that the popular view of Spaniards regarding professions like Ana's was that these are considered to be a man's job.

Part (c) proved to be problematic for some candidates. Some stated that the major challenge for Ana Rodríguez in her profession was that she experienced some type of discrimination/disrespect on the job, but did not specify what type. Others mentioned her treatment as a woman on the job, but were too vague. Far too many explanations were marred by poor expression. Therefore, markers were challenged in deciphering answers. Only a small number of candidates combined the ideas that she had to *fight for respect on a professional level*.

Several candidates correctly answered Part (d) (i), which asked for Ana's explanation of the general mistrust regarding the potential of women as professionals. They stated that women can get married and have children. However, many paraphrased the answer as 'housewife', 'a woman's place is in the home' and 'women should not work'.

While several candidates were able to correctly answer Part (d) (ii), on how this mistrust can be harmful to women, some instead gave the answer for Part (d) (i).

Part 2

Few candidates were able to answer Part (e) fully. Many stated that women can change men's negative perception of women in the workplace since women 'have the capacity to do what men do and even better'. Others stated that women 'must work hard in what they do' or that they 'must be professional'. Again, expression was weak and difficult to interpret.

Part (f) was poorly done. A number of candidates appeared to be unfamiliar with the expression *double-edged sword*. A few candidates gave the correct answer that *a woman's dress code can be both an advantage and a disadvantage to her*. Many responses centred on a woman's sense of fashion and its impact on her job environment (distracting men and bosses). Examples include 'it can take away from her professionalism', 'it can make her turn like a hurricane', 'she can be juicy or mild', 'looking scruffy on the job but nice outside'. Some others were able to give explanations or examples of one side of the response: either the negative or the positive, and as such gained half of the marks.

Part (g), what does Ana consider to be the most satisfying aspect of her job, was also poorly handled. Candidates seemed to rely heavily on previous/general knowledge about women in the workplace. The majority of responses here were far-fetched or badly expressed. Only a small minority gave the answer that *she proved that she was right when she completed a task that was challenging to her or that she demonstrated through practice that others who criticized her were wrong*.

For Part (h), almost all candidates missed the element of Ana's early frustrations being *managerial issues*. For the most part, *gerencial* was misinterpreted as 'general' or 'generalized'. Overall, the vast majority of candidates scored only one mark out of three for stating that the issues she faced did not relate to her condition as a woman.

Recommendations for Teachers

- Provide students with more listening practice with *timed exercises*, allowing them to use their own equipment rather than teacher-controlled equipment.
- Give students vocabulary recognition exercises and word association exercises as part of listening comprehension training.
- Have students practise listening for gist to improve overall comprehension skills rather than simply listing information.
- *Where possible* try exercises that focus on students refining the structure of their responses, rather than just providing a correct response.
- Try short transcription exercises with students on topics from all three modules from very early in the CAPE programme.

Recommendations for Candidates

- Do as much independent listening as possible using online and other audio resources to hone listening skills (music, podcasts, music videos/videos, documentaries widely available). Make listening to the language part of your daily existence.
- Remember that responses must be clearly expressed and make logical sense in English.
- Read questions before listening to the audio.
- Consider the mark scheme in providing responses.
- Proofread responses to ensure logic and coherence.
- Write concise and precise responses to avoid ambiguity.

Paper 02 – Reading and Writing

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. For Passage 2, the questions were in Spanish and candidates were to respond in Spanish, using their own words.

Passage 1 – *La importancia de dormir bien*

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

Overall, performance on this question was satisfactory. From the responses given, it was evident that candidates had a good knowledge of this topic.

Part (a) required candidates to describe two main functions of sleep. The responses were, in most instances, complete with full marks being awarded. Only a small number of candidates misinterpreted the passage and as such their responses were haphazard and incorrect. These candidates referred to the digestive processes rather than sleep.

Part (b) asked candidates to explain how the homeostatic system in the brain works. Generally, this question posed problems. Many candidates were able to identify the homeostatic system as an indicator and that it regulates sleep but only a few were able to explain how the process works. As a result, only

partial marks were awarded. Candidates need to be reminded of the importance of paying attention to the exact requirements of the question.

Part (c) (i) required candidates to state one shortcoming of the Carcadian System. This was the most problematic question for candidates. While they were able to identify that the Carcadian System was an *alert system*, there were difficulties in explaining how the system affected sleep. The vocabulary seemed to have posed a challenge for candidates as many were unable to provide an adequate explanation in their responses.

Part (c) (ii) asked candidates to say what can be done to overcome this shortcoming. Many candidates were able to correctly state that one can adapt one's lighting to one's daily routine.

Part (d) asked candidates to provide details about light and its effect on sleep. While this question was fairly well answered, there were many instances where candidates attempted to answer by translating the entire paragraph. This resulted in candidates giving irrelevant information. For quite a number of candidates, basic vocabulary posed problems. Quite a number of candidates translated *luz* as 'moon', and, as such, erroneously interpreted the entire response. There were instances of candidates interchanging the details about light and its effects.

For Part (e) candidates were required to give two possible dangerous consequences of sleeping too much. There was almost universal success in the answering of this question. However, there was quite a high rate of misspelling of the words *obese* and *obesity*. While spelling was not penalized, candidates must be especially careful at this level.

Parts (f)–(j) required candidates to provide synonyms taken from the passage for given words. This part of the question was well handled by most candidates. Most candidates were able to identify four out of the five synonyms. The most problematic item in this section was Part (g), *equilibrio*, where many candidates gave the word *cansancio* as the synonym. There were also some instances of candidates giving complete phrases as synonyms rather than a single word. Candidates must be reminded that the synonyms that they give must match the given word.

Passage 2 – *Animales en peligro de extinción*

Candidates were required to respond to questions in Spanish based on a passage in Spanish.

The questions on the passage posed challenges to many candidates. The major problem encountered was candidates' disregard of instructions to answer in their own words. Far too many responses, in some cases entire paragraphs, were copied directly from the passage. Candidates seemed to have bare knowledge of the topic and dealt with this by reproducing the passage in their responses. Those who attempted to rephrase responses in their own words did so with great difficulty.

Many responses were cluttered. Only 30 per cent of candidates were able to score in the 16–24 range. There were a few responses given in English when the specific instruction was to answer in Spanish. These responses were not considered and candidates scored no marks.

Part (a) required candidates to identify *el problema, según el pasaje*. Most candidates were successful in their responses. However, far too many of the responses were lifted directly from the passage.

Part (b) asked candidates to say what *contribución ha hecho el hombre al problema*. The responses for this question were too often copied from the passage. Many candidates could not understand the information given and as a result proffered details that were not in the passage.

Part (c) required candidates to say *qué ocurriría si la desaparición continuara*. This question also posed problems for candidates. While many understood that the outcome would be the gradual and eventual loss of biodiversity, many candidates had problems rewording their responses and as such copied the entire sentence ... *lleva a la pérdida gradual de la biodiversidad, un proceso imparabile y progresivo*.

Part (d) asked *¿cómo afecta la biodiversidad la calidad de vida para la gente?* This was undoubtedly one of the better answered questions. Many candidates were able to identify the different ways in which biodiversity affected the quality of life. However, many responses were lifted from the passage.

Very few candidates were able to rephrase the answer for Part (e) which required candidates to name *DOS cosas de interés que revelan los estudios*. Many candidates simply copied the entire third paragraph as their response. Those candidates who did attempt to respond in their own words did so well and were awarded the full marks for this question. This question required that candidates give the statistical data in the responses; however, a fair number of candidates only gave general data rather than the specific.

Part (f) asked candidates to give *DOS motivos por la desaparición del perriquito*. There was much confusion in answering this question. Some candidates copied the last sentence of the passage as their response for this question. Other candidates gave responses about the *ballenas, rinocerontes y elefantes*, when the question asked specifically about the *perriquito*. It was clear that candidates did not understand key words and this was responsible for the misinterpretation of the question.

Part (g) was an opinion question. Some candidates made a creditable effort in providing the information required and as such were rewarded with full marks. Other candidates gave incomplete responses. In some instances, there seemed to be a lack of comprehension of the question and as such candidates copied paragraphs from the passage as their response. In some instances, the responses copied did not even address the issue of conserving biodiversity.

Section B – Essays

Candidates were required to write an essay, in Spanish, of 250–300 words, on one of five topics. This section assessed candidates' ability to express themselves in Spanish in an analytical and logical manner related to the theme as outlined in Module 2 of the syllabus. Candidates were assessed on content and presentation (organization and coverage of the topic, relevance and inclusion of facts, ideas and opinions) and correctness of expression (range of vocabulary and idioms as well as accuracy of grammatical structures).

It is noteworthy that most candidates were able to answer the questions. There were very few scripts where there was no response. The level of competence ranged from excellent to poor with candidates unable to master basic grammatical structures. Vocabulary, spelling, accentuation, conjugation of verbs and improper word order made it a challenging exercise for candidates to master. Some candidates used the wording of the question as their introduction and conclusion, while a minority lifted expressions from the reading passages in Section A. It was noted, however, that candidates had proper essay format as was evidenced by their introduction, their clearly stated points and conclusion. There were a few excellent essays that clearly demonstrated that candidates understood the question, showed maturity of thought, reasoning and essay analysis and were able to write coherently. There were also very few scripts that excelled with use of expression and vocabulary and good control of information.

Question 3

Una población sana es una población productiva. ¿Estás de acuerdo?

Candidates were able to explain what it meant to be healthy and how that impacted on the productivity of a nation. Such candidates spoke about the value of being physically, mentally and emotionally healthy. Excellent answers stressed the need for a holistic society and how it can be linked to the productivity of a country. Some candidates misunderstood the word *sana* to mean *safe* or *clean*, and this led to the misinterpretation of the question. Some candidates created erroneous words and Anglicisms.

Some common errors in expression that were produced by candidates included:

- *Handlar* (to handle)
- *Ailimentos* (ailments)
- *Addrasar* (to address)
- *Un mal salud*
- *Psychología*
- *Populación*
- *La vida estilo*

Question 4

El desempleo no desaparecerá hasta que todo el mundo tenga una buena educación. ¿Qué opinas?

This was the second most popular question attempted by candidates and was handled quite well in some cases. Performance varied between weak and excellent. Outstanding candidates displayed excellent organization and coverage of topic and produced essays that were well argued and structured. The essays included facts, ideas and opinions. There was a wide range of structures and vocabulary and excellent use of idioms. In general, candidates were able to see that a good education is vital to a successful life and steady employment. They were able to argue that there were less educated persons who fulfil roles in jobs that were necessary for the upkeep of our society, for example, garbage collectors. They indicated that a good education does not necessarily translate into a job because of reasons such as the economy of the country and the world recession.

Some common errors in expression that were produced by candidates included:

- *El gobierno eliminar*
- *El gobierno*
- *La país*
- *Es un tema caliente*

Question 5

La violencia es el mayor peligro de nuestros días. ¿Qué piensas?

This was the most popular choice among candidates. However, it was the least well done. The majority of candidates stated the causes and effects of violence without establishing how it was the greatest danger of our time. They often repeated the same point in all paragraphs. Barely adequate discussion coverage of the topic and irrelevant facts and ideas affected coherence at times. Candidates have the general knowledge but a misunderstanding of the question and a lack of proper application of knowledge resulted

in low scores. Candidates who scored in the 19–24 range were able to give a global outlook on other major dangers such as environmental issues, diseases and the economy thus showing that violence was not necessarily the greatest danger. Those who did show that violence was the most serious danger, demonstrated this by highlighting the impact on different aspects of the country for example, family and social life, economic and security issues. They then proceeded to explain what authorities and individuals could do to alleviate this problem.

Some common errors in expression that were produced by candidates included:

- *Mal padres*
- *Mal influencias*
- *El gobierno eliminar*
- *Nuestras dias*
- *Los individuos quien una victim*
- *Es cará con una taza alta de crimé*
- *Ensear vs aprender*
- *La violencia es un tema mucho calor*
- *La violencia juvenil*

Question 6

La libertad de la prensa debería ser limitada. ¿Cuál es tu opinión?

This was the least popular question. Responses ranged from satisfactory to excellent. Candidates who attempted this question said that the freedom of the press should be limited to a certain extent because of the effects on the family and youth and invasion of privacy. However, at the same time some argued that it should not be limited and supported this by saying that there is more transparency when it is not. They also said that citizens were able to know what is happening in the country and issues are not covered up with the freedom of the press. In a few cases, candidates veered away from the topic and included other media (television, Internet) in their discussion when the focus was supposed to be solely on the print media (publications, newspapers, magazines).

Some common errors in expression that were produced by candidates included:

- *Ellos son haciendo*
- *Los jovenes son abre a materials explicito*
- *Son afectado*
- *Hay sexuales advertismo*

Question 7

Los inmigrantes deberían tener los mismos derechos que los ciudadanos. ¿Qué opinas?

The range of marks was similar to that of Question 6. For the most part, the question was handled fairly well. There were some exceptions with candidates who just did not know how to handle the question or how to bring their ideas across on the topic. Those who argued for immigrants having the same rights spoke about their contribution to society, culturally and financially, and basic human rights. Those who argued against found that immigrants took away jobs from citizens and some of them added to the crime situation of the host country.

Some common errors in expression that were produced by candidates included:

- *Mientras que permitiendo que los habitantes son pasados*
- *Personas quien son haciendo*
- *Estoy no de acuerdo*
- *Tener tan muchos personas*
- *Se cuenta que la libertad*
- *Inigualdad*

Recommendations for Students

- Read from a variety of different sources.
- Be aware of current issues.
- Read questions properly and create an essay plan.
- Underline the key words and link arguments to the key words, so as to ensure correct interpretation of questions.
- Use statistics and factual information to support positions taken.
- Pay attention to key areas such as spelling, agreement, negatives, position of words, accentuation, grammatical structures, conjugation of verbs, the subjunctive mood and omission of the definite and indefinite articles.

Recommendations for Teachers

- Stress grammatical correctness.
- Review the mark scheme.
- Discuss with students the topics in each module.
- Expose students to sample or authentic material to show the quality of work that is required of them.
- Develop writing skills of students.

Paper 03 – Literary Analysis and Themes

Section A – Literary Analysis

In Section A, candidates were required to respond to one of four possible extracts taken from the prescribed texts on the syllabus. Each question comprised four parts (a,b,c,d). These questions focused on a literary analysis of given passages and asked candidates to relate the plot, analyse characters from the extract, and identify literary techniques found in the given passage. Required responses in this section were *limited to the given extract* and not the entire text. All answers were required in Spanish.

Question Popularity

| QUESTION # | POPULARITY |
|---|------------|
| 1. <i>La familia de Pascual Duarte</i> | 11 % |
| 2. <i>Crónica de una muerte anunciada</i> | 20% |
| 3. <i>Felices Días, Tío Sergio</i> | 10 % |
| 4. <i>17 narradoras latinoamericanas</i> | 59 % |

Candidates generally did not demonstrate a clear knowledge and understanding of the texts studied, particularly of *La familia de Pascual Duarte*, and *Crónica de una muerte anunciada*. Facts included were

often not pertinent to the given extract and as such were considered unnecessary and were not awarded any additional marks.

Question Performance Breakdown

| RANGE | QUES 1 | QUES 2 | QUES 3 | QUES 4 |
|-------|--------|--------|--------|--------|
| 16 | 0% | 0% | 0% | 0% |
| 14–15 | 3% | 1% | 5% | 8% |
| 12–13 | 9% | 1% | 3% | 11% |
| 9–11 | 16% | 10% | 28% | 28% |
| 7–8 | 16% | 23% | 17% | 18% |
| 4–6 | 27% | 28% | 25% | 20% |
| 1–3 | 29% | 33% | 16% | 13% |
| 0 | 0% | 4% | 6% | 2% |

Question 1: *La familia de Pascual Duarte*

Performance on this question was generally disappointing. In Part (a), candidates often gave an overview of the text rather than of the extract. The majority of candidates were able to identify that the women were in mourning. However, some candidates focused mainly on Pascualillo's death which was not referred to in the extract. An example of a candidate's clear misunderstanding of the plot of the extract was the reference made to a wolf being responsible for many deaths in the village. This was probably as a result of the student misinterpreting the line *...con su paso de lobo cauteloso...*

In response to Part (b), most candidates identified the narrative point of view as first-person narrator. However, many candidates failed to give adequate support from the extract. Many candidates were unable to identify the subjectivity of this type of narration. Candidates also failed to recognize the narrator's impatience with the three women.

In response to Part (c) (i), most candidates were able to correctly identify the literary technique as being comparison or simile. Instead of using their own words to state what they inferred about the women in Part (c) (ii), candidates simply lifted the first line of the extract, '*...calladas como muertos, hurañas, serias como carabineros*'.

For Part (d), some candidates were able to identify the sadness of the episode. However, they had greater difficulty recognizing the sense of foreboding (*presagio*) conveyed by *El mal aire traidor andaba aún por el campo*. Those who were able to recognize the ill omen made the error of stating the effect on Pascual and not on the reader.

Question 2: *Crónica de una muerte anunciada*

Performance on this question was not good. In Part (a), candidates were able to identify that there was a third-person narrator but did not recognize that the narrator was not totally omniscient (*omnisciente limitado*). Some candidates successfully identified that it was an investigative narrator, or chronicler, (*narrador investigador*). Valid examples of third-person narration were rarely included.

Some candidates were unable to comment on the narrative point of view, providing instead elements of the plot. For example, '*el punto de vista de este episodio es que Santiago Nasar es no bueno hombre y tenía motivos para sentirse defraudado*'.

In Part (b), some candidates confused the two characters, Santiago and Bayardo. This confusion led to incorrect justification of the responses as they wrongfully thought that the entire extract was about Santiago's wedding and that it was Santiago who had provided everything. Candidates who were able to successfully characterize Santiago gave responses such as *bello, generoso, feliz, deseable, rico...*

Performance on Part (c) was much better than on the other parts. Many candidates were able to recognize that a great deal of money had been spent on the celebrations and that there was an abundance of food and drink. However, some candidates still persisted in identifying Santiago as the provider of the feast. Few candidates were able to recognize that the lines also indicated the social status of Bayardo's family.

The most popular responses to Part (d) were happiness and disappointment, whereas few candidates were able to identify the joyous abandon and sense of togetherness generated within the community. Candidates did not manage to successfully support their answer with appropriate citations from the text.

Question 3: Felices Días, Tío Sergio

Performance on this question was fair. Part (a) was reasonably well done by candidates. Most candidates identified Lidia and the boys and stated that they were rummaging through the adults' belongings. However, no candidate made mention of the fact that two boxes had arrived. Some candidates mistakenly identified the items as belonging to Tío Sergio and not to the adults of the family such as Mamá Sara.

In Part (b), some candidates were able to identify a first-person narrative point of view. However, where they were able to identify the point of view, a third-person explanation was given. Candidates failed to mention the subjectivity of such a perspective.

For Part (c), candidates made good use of the dictionary to identify appropriate adjectives to characterize the narrator. They were also able to adequately support and justify their responses. For example, the narrator is described as *curiosa* and this was supported by *Nosotros usualmente nos metíamos en los roperos de la gente grande de mi familia...*

Based on the responses for Part (d), it was evident that candidates still do not understand tone. The most popular responses to this question included '*felicidad*', '*aventura*' and '*intriga*', clearly showing that candidates confused tone with the prevailing atmosphere. More appropriate adjectives to describe the tone of this extract would have been *alegre, informativo*.

Question 4: 17 narradoras latinoamericanas

The majority of candidates attempted this question. In Part (a), candidates 'lifted' heavily from the text to summarize the plot instead of writing in their own words. There was a general misunderstanding of what the *trama* really is; it is simply the series of events that occurs in the extract and it requires the candidate to show nothing more than comprehension. An analysis or overview of the story is not required. Candidates tended to focus more on the sexual awakening of the protagonist, than on the sequence of events. Candidates also failed to see that it was only the protagonist who was affected by *una sed enorme*. Many stated that it was the group of boys on the bus. Candidates need to be reminded that the protagonist is a young boy and not a man.

For Part (b), several candidates inexplicably identified the narrative point of view as a feminine one and a few even linked it to the statue of the woman that appears later in the story. Many candidates confused first-person and third-person narrative perspective and stated that it was the young boy who was relating his story.

Candidates appeared to have difficulty identifying literary technique for Part (c) and most of them incorrectly stated that a metaphor was used. Those who did understand were able to identify it as *personificación* or *hipérbole*. Candidates who could not state *hyperbole* still managed to recognize that there was exaggeration. Most candidates were able to select the appropriate citation from the text but several candidates did not take the example from the fourth paragraph but used ‘...*la brisa fresca le diese en la cara...*’. Candidates did not adequately elaborate on the technique used. They stated the technique but did not aptly justify their answer.

In response to Part (d), a range of emotions was identified. However, identifying specific emotions still posed a challenge to many candidates. Many candidates misinterpreted *esperar* in the line *La cuestión era esperar, esperar...* as meaning ‘hopeful’ when he was really anxiously waiting. Successful responses included *alegría, tranquilidad, ansiedad* and *alivio*.

Recommendations

- No English is allowed in Section A; candidates should not write any words in English as no marks will be awarded.
- Candidates should avoid using the citations to give the sequence of events. Citations should be used to support answers, not just lifted and written as answers themselves.
- When outlining the plot of the extract, candidates should use their own words, and facts should be sequenced logically.
- Candidates should be familiar with vocabulary related to literary analysis such as *relata* and *trama*.
- Candidates should try to keep the length of the response commensurate with the number of marks awarded for the question.
- Teachers should review plot, narrative point of view, tone, emotions, atmosphere and literary techniques.
- Grammar needs to be reviewed, for example, subject/verb agreement and tenses.

Section B – Themes

Candidates were required to write an essay, of 350–400 words, in English, on one of the questions relating to the theme *El individuo y la sociedad* or *La juventud*. They were also required to use one of the prescribed texts for the theme selected and discuss issues relevant to the question. Candidates were awarded marks for Knowledge and Understanding (16 marks), Application of Knowledge (9 marks) and Organization of Information (7 marks).

Overall, candidate performance in this section was satisfactory.

Question 5

Societal norms curb one’s individualism. Do you agree?

This was the most popular question and was attempted by 54 per cent of the candidates. Responses were generally satisfactory with a few candidates scoring in the very good to excellent range. In this question, candidates were required to identify societal codes/expectations and show how they place a check on one’s individualism. In other words, they were expected to show that societal norms control one’s behaviour as they can restrict the characters in the text from doing what they would like to do, in terms of pursuing their own interests, making their own decisions etc. Some candidates however misconstrued the term *curb* to mean ‘shaped or influenced’ and therefore their essays did not respond to the question set.

Some candidates who used *Crónica de una muerte anunciada* were better able to show how the identified characters were prevented from behaving as they wanted than those who used the text *La familia de Pascual Duarte*. Some candidates who chose the latter text generally submitted essays that were constructed around destiny and marginalization or in many cases, essays that showed how man is a product of the society in which he lives, all issues that were not relevant to the question posed.

Question 6

Society must protect the common good above all. What is your opinion?

Twelve per cent of the candidates attempted this question, the majority of them scoring in the weak to minimal range. Candidates were required to show an understanding of the term *common good* which refers to that which is beneficial to all of a community, for example, order, justice, security and honour. They were further required to show how it must be protected by all, using examples from the text studied. The concept of the common good remained vague to the majority of candidates who attempted this question and their responses were limited in many cases to a mere summary of the text. A few candidates who used *Crónica de una muerte anunciada* were able to identify honour as an aspect of the common good supporting it with analysis and relevant examples from the text.

Question 7

Youth is a time of disillusionment with the adult world. Do you agree?

This was the second most popular question chosen and was attempted by 24 per cent of the candidates. The majority of responses earned marks in the weak to satisfactory range. Candidates were expected to demonstrate an understanding of disillusionment as loss of ideals or illusions, an eye opening experience or even disappointment on realizing that someone or something is not what one believed it to be. They were also required to link their understanding of disillusionment with issues or behaviours of adults. Candidates who scored in the minimal to weak range generally wrote summaries of the short stories or texts studied instead of analysing of the issues relevant to the question.

Some candidates also misinterpreted disillusionment to mean confusion, fantasy and unhappiness. However, some candidates who used the three short stories from *17 narradoras latinoamericanas* were generally able to identify Analía's disillusionment with the actions of Tío Eugenio and Luis, in "*Cartas de amor traicionado*". They also correctly showed the young narrator's disappointment due to her father's lies and deception in "*La casa nueva*." A few candidates attempted to use "*El primer beso*" to answer this question but failed to realize it was not the most appropriate story except if it were used as a counterargument: a period of enlightenment. Some candidates who used *Felices días, Tío Sergio* were able to identify Lidia's disappointment with the double standards among the adults within their household, their prejudices, Tío Sergio's departure as well as the hypocrisy of him becoming intimate with the black maid. However, some candidates misinterpreted Lidia's disillusionment with her unhappiness with the rules and regulations imposed by her family.

Question 8

Adolescent girls seek idealistic love while adolescent boys are more interested in sexual experience. What is your view?

This was the least popular question, attempted by ten per cent of the candidates. Responses varied from weak to excellent with the majority of candidates scoring in the weak to satisfactory range. As the question stated, candidates were expected to show how a desire for idealistic love — interest in romance,

lofty love and marriage, is associated with adolescent girls while desire for sexual experience is more prevalent among boys, in the text studied. Some candidates who used *Felices Días, Tío Sergio*, correctly identified Lidia's interest in idealistic love and Andres' interest in the sexual experience. As counterarguments, they correctly showed that girls may be interested in the sexual experience, for example, Lidia reading books about sex at puberty, and Andres' and Manuel's interest in idealistic love and not the sexual experience. Some candidates who used the three short stories from *17 narradoras latinoamericanas*, were able to identify Analía's interest in idealistic love in “*Cartas de amor traicionado*” via her letters to Luis and falling in love with him. They also used “*El primer beso*” to show boys' interest in sexual experience via the young man's sexual awakening. A few candidates attempted to use “*La casa nueva*” but failed to realize that it was not appropriate for the question.

Candidates' Strengths

- Some candidates demonstrated sound knowledge of the text studied and commendable analytical skills. They were able to identify the issues in the text relevant to the question posed and discuss them using solid supporting details.
- Good or excellent essays included a brief introduction with a well-constructed thesis, three to five well-supported points with a counterargument, and a brief conclusion.
- Some candidates made appropriate use of quotations. Quotations generally supported the points made and were well integrated into the essay.

Candidates' Weaknesses

- Some essays were mere summaries of the text instead of analyses.
- Some essays exceeded the word limit of 350–400 words.
- Some essays were padded with long quotations as well as rambling historical and philosophical perspectives.
- Some responses were riddled with factual inaccuracies related to the text.
- Some candidates misinterpreted key words/phrases in the questions and therefore did not address the relevant issues, for example, *curb* in Question 5, *common good* in Question 6 and *disillusionment* in Question 7.

Suggestions and Recommendations for Teachers

Teachers should:

- Ensure that they identify and discuss the issues related to the theme within the chosen text. Historical and philosophical perspectives, though necessary for class discussion, do not need to appear in the written examination.
- Refrain from primarily instructing students based on past essays as students seek to regurgitate information, regardless of the question set.
- Advise students to take their time to read and carefully select questions as some texts are more appropriate than others for certain questions.
- Advise students to stay within the word limit as examiners do not read beyond the stipulated word limit.
- Help students to cultivate practices of proper essay writing — Introduction/Body/Conclusion.
- Advise students that an excellent response should include

- (i) a brief introduction with a clear thesis statement relating to the text;
- (ii) four to five solid points, supported by concise, appropriate, brief and complete quotes, and an informed personal opinion, each in a new paragraph, one of which should be a counterpoint to show balance in the response;
- (iii) a brief conclusion.

Irregularities

- Writing general essay instead of thematic essay
- Using the same text in Sections A and B
- Using the wrong text for a stated theme, for example, *Felices Días, Tío Sergio* to answer a question on *El individuo y la sociedad*.

Paper 04 – School-Based Assessment (SBA)

This paper required students to (i) make an oral presentation on their topic of choice within the framework of the three modules, and (ii) engage in conversation with the examiner on the topic as well as on current issues.

The SBA for Unit 1 was favourable. Out of a possible 48, the majority of students scored between 29 and 45. In almost every case, the topic chosen was relevant to the unit and appropriate for the level of the student. In general, there seemed to be a preponderance of topics related to drugs and crime. At some centres, these same areas of concern were overly repeated.

Except for a very few exceptions, examiners complied with the guidelines of the syllabus that relate to the format of the examination and the length of time stipulated for it. One or two examiners, perhaps caught up in the flow of conversation, surpassed the fifteen-minute time limit.

Most examiners endeavoured to maintain a conversational tone and provide positive reinforcement to the students. However, there were times when the entire exercise sounded like a question and answer exercise and not nearly enough students took the initiative to engage the examiner in conversation.

Also, there were a few instances when the questions were rather simplistic, more applicable to the CSEC format and some where the teachers were too deliberate in speech, almost to the point of distorting the language.

Further Comments

By and large the marking was acceptable in quality as teachers generally adhered to the marking criteria. In only a few instances was there a significant variance between the teacher's mark and that of the moderator.

Recommendations for Teachers

Teachers should ensure that

- students speak to a 'thesis' and not just a 'topic'; thus giving impetus to the better development of a conversation rather than a regurgitation of facts and statistics
- there is enough class discussion on topics in the syllabus so students can become used to expressing their opinions in the foreign language using the appropriate vocabulary and structure

- enough attention is paid to the articulation of the discrete sounds to promote pronunciation, intonation and fluency
- in the flow and excitement of the conversation sight is not lost of subject-verb agreement, correct usage of articles and tenses
- students engage them in conversation and do not simply reverse a process of interrogation
- all samples are contained on one CD, with details of the programme used for recording. This would go a long way to reducing the time it takes to moderate
- every effort is made to render the recording environment as hermetic as possible — free of distracting noises
- recorded samples be checked for quality before submission to CXC.

UNIT 2

Paper 01 – Listening Comprehension

This paper assessed candidates' ability to respond in English to stimuli in Spanish, and covered topics from all three modules of the syllabus. Candidates were presented with five short selections and one extended interview in Spanish and were required to respond to questions based on the material in short-answer format.

The majority of candidates performed better in Section B than Section A. There was a general weakness in expression more so in Section A than Section B. Some candidates' responses lacked logic and coherence and many had poor spelling. Only a few candidates did not complete the entire paper.

Section A – Short Selections

The results were generally satisfactory. The majority of candidates completed the entire section. However, some responses indicated that candidates needed to take greater care in responding to questions instead of using literal translation.

A range of spelling errors and weakness in expression often posed challenges to examiners to determine the accuracy of the response. Additionally, vocabulary recognition was a major shortcoming of several candidates. Many of them did not understand the following words: *ventanilla informática, europea, entrenamiento, regularidad, endurecimiento, conjunta, inversiones, superfluos, funcionarios, 13 mil millones, mineros, 11:15, tubo, sirvió, de ambas partes, se suicidó, se enfrentó a.*

Selection 1

The performance on this selection, which looked at the European Space Agency, was fairly good. However, numbers as well as vocabulary recognition continue to pose problems for candidates.

Most candidates provided the correct response to Part (a), on the name of the organization seeking applications. However, there were a few glaring responses such as 'Rope Agency', 'The Ropel Agency', 'Agency of Outer Space', 'the European Agency of Outer Space', 'Clothing Agency' and 'NASA'. These responses showed that some candidates had difficulty understanding the word *Europea*.

Part (b) asked for the location where application forms will be available. This was the least attempted of all the questions, and of those who attempted it only a very small number of candidates got the correct response — *online*. Amongst some of the incorrect responses given were: 'near the moon', 'on the moon,

hospital', 'information window', 'Africa, at the information desk', 'at the agency' and 'at the organization'.

Part (c) was fairly well done. However, many candidates were unable to give both parts of the response as to who may apply; a few candidates were able to identify *both men and women*.

For Part (d), the majority of candidates gave the correct number of applications the organization is hoping to receive. However, numbers continue to pose problems for candidates. Some candidates were only able to identify one side of the range correctly either '20 000' or '50 000'.

The majority of candidates performed well on Part (e), which asked for the total number of persons to be chosen by the organization. Some candidates gave the number 'four' instead of 30 as their response.

Part (f), on who is responsible for the final decision, was well done.

Part (g) proved to be the most troubling for candidates. Many candidates opted to put the age range rather than the qualifications required of candidates. In identifying the required qualifications the applicants must possess, many candidates used vague expressions such as 'medicine' instead of *doctor* and 'pilotry' instead of *pilot*. Some glaring responses were: 'have disciples as pilots', 'engineers or doctors'; 'must be a disciple'; 'deciple in doctor or pilot'; 'a degree in pilotry'; 'superior studies/education'.

Selection 2

This selection, which looked at the effects of sleep deprivation, was well done by the majority of candidates. Many of them were able to score at least ten marks, with quite a number of them scoring the maximum twelve marks. However, there were still several unacceptable responses.

The majority of candidates provided the correct response to Part (a), on the cause of the rise in illnesses in the society. However, there were a few incorrect responses such as 'dreaming'; 'reduction in the hours of dreaming'; 'lack of sleep'. Candidates who had the phrase 'lack of sleep' were awarded a mark.

Part (b) was fairly well done. Most candidates were able to identify both illnesses mentioned in the selection. However, a few gave incorrect responses such as 'Parkinson's disease'; 'insomnia'; 'arthritis'; 'anxiety'; 'heart attack'. Some candidates were unable to recognize that hypertension means high blood pressure and gave both responses.

Part (c) caused some difficulty for candidates. Many of them were unable to indicate what was said about one third of the Western world's adult population. One difficulty stemmed from being unable to relate the illness with the lack of sleep or illness related to sleep. In addition, many of them understood the translation of the word *patología* but confused 'pathology' with 'pathological'. *A lo largo de la vida* also caused a lot of difficulty for the candidates, as they interpreted this expression as 'longevity of life'; 'long length of life'; 'to lengthen one's life'.

Part (d) asked for three requirements that are essential for sleeping well. This question was fairly well answered. However, some candidates translated *la regularidad* as regular exercise. This showed that many of them used previous knowledge in responding to this question.

Selection 3

Performance on this selection was generally good. Once again some candidates did not follow the instructions and used ticks instead of writing *True* or *False*. Many candidates were unable to give the correct responses for Parts (a), (b) and (f).

Selection 4

This selection looked at how business/financial trends impact on governmental policies. This question was satisfactorily done.

Part (a), on one factor that has caused government spending to be put on hold, was poorly done. The majority of candidates could not identify the word *endurecimiento* (worsening), hence they were unable to obtain full marks. Few candidates were able to identify the response *financial market*. Among some of the incorrect responses were: ‘persons in a plane crash’; ‘industrial crisis’; ‘economic crisis’; ‘financial crisis’; ‘crisis’; ‘stock market’.

Part (b) was well done. Most candidates correctly identified the government that was mentioned as being affected. However, a few of the incorrect responses were: ‘Spain’; ‘The US government’; ‘the Francis government’; ‘the government in the Health Ministry’.

Part (c) was generally not well done. Candidates were unable to correctly identify two measures that the government has implemented. Many candidates used the expressions ‘inversions’, ‘imbunctions’, ‘superflux’, and ‘the elimination of superfluous gases’ as part of their response. This indicated that *inversions* and *gastos superfluos* were misunderstood. Most candidates did not understand the word *funcionarios* (civil servants) and instead only responded with ‘jobs would be cut by 5 per cent’.

Part (d) also posed some challenges for many candidates. While many of them were able to identify the aim of the new measures, many candidates focused on the amount of money to be spent. Once again numbers proved to be challenging.

Selection 5

Overall performance on this selection was satisfactory. It was evident that many candidates did not understand the selection on the group of miners who were rescued from a mine in Chile.

Responses to Part (a) were satisfactory. However, many candidates did not understand the word *mineros* (miners) thus giving incorrect responses to the question of who are the persons mentioned in the passage. Incorrect responses included: ‘Chilean shoemakers’; ‘trespassers’; ‘hikers’; ‘passengers on a ship’; ‘boaters’; ‘people held hostage/kidnapped’; ‘a camera crew’; ‘documenters’; ‘persons from (North of) Chile’; ‘photographers’; ‘climbers’; ‘minors’.

Part (b) was fairly done. Candidates were generally able to explain what happened to the group of persons mentioned in the selection. However, among some of the responses were: ‘trapped in North Chile’; ‘trapped in a whole cave of pepper’; ‘trapped in the heart of the jungle of Chile’; ‘they were arrested by the government’.

Many candidates were able to reveal some information about Florencio Avalos, in response to Part (c).

Part (d) was not well done. While a few candidates were able to say when Avalos was rescued, there were many incorrect responses such as: ‘he was rescued with a camera in a straw’; ‘15 of November’; ‘the day of the day’; ‘15 days after Tuesday’; ‘11–15 days’; ‘he was rescued when he paid his sum of \$1,500’; ‘he was rescued in 1815’; ‘he was rescued at 11:55/1:15 p.m.’; ‘11 of 15’’. Many candidates gave the answer for Part (c) — *he was rescued first*.

Part (e) was also poorly done. Only a few candidates were able to say how Avalos was rescued. Some incorrect/alarming responses were: ‘he escaped through a window’; ‘with a camera in a straw/like a

chicken'; 'by breaking his feet'; 'he was rescued by a crane/bulldozer/catapult'; 'Silvio rescued him' (misinterpreted for *servió como la vía de escape*); 'someone whistled and rescued him and he heard it'; 'a turbo vehicle was attached to a rope and pulled Avalos out of the trench'; 'they were rescued one by one' (which was the most common correct response); 'they jumped on a trampoline until they reached high enough to reach the surface'; 'they stood on each person's shoulders until they formed a human ladder'.

Section B – Extended Interview

Selection 6

The sixth selection was an interview with Dr Teresa Balcón, psychologist with the University of Wisconsin, on *sexting* among teens. Performance was generally good. Most of the candidates scored between 16 and 24 out of a possible 24 marks.

Part 1

The vast majority of candidates correctly defined *sexting*, Part (a). However, many candidates did not specify that it was a nude picture of oneself/himself/herself and used 'boyfriend and girlfriend' instead of *adolescent, teenager or young people*.

Part (b) was very well done, with most candidates responding to the widespread nature of *sexting* among teenagers in the United States. Only a few candidates used incorrect statistics, such as 'every one of five'; 'one out of four'; 'five out of twenty per cent'. Some candidates opted to use other statistics: 'one fifth (1/5)' and '20 per 100', which worked out to the correct response: *20 per cent*.

Most candidates performed well on Part (c). While most were able to explain why *sexting* was dangerous, a few were unable to identify that there were *negative consequences*.

Part (d) was fairly well done. Though most of the candidates stated that *sexting* was illegal, they failed to acknowledge that the illegality was linked to the sexually explicit photos of a minor — *...es ilegal enviar o distribuir fotos sexualmente explícitas de un joven menor de 18 años*, rather than 'the distribution of explicit pictures *by or to* minors'. Many candidates had difficulty with the expression *incluso con el consentimiento de ambas partes*. Some said 'without the consent of the parents'; or 'without the consent of both parts'.

Part 2

Part (e) was well done. Candidates were able to suggest how *sexting* can be stopped.

Part (f) asked candidates to indicate who was Jessica Logan. This posed a great deal of problems for many candidates. Some of them did not specify that the nude photo sent to her boyfriend was of *herself*. Many candidates also had difficulty with the expression *terminó en manos de cientos de adolescentes*, with many of them stating that 'the pictures were sent to MySpace and Facebook'; 'to others'; 'to adults'; 'to everyone in Ohio/Hawaii'. There were also responses such as: 'she was a young detective that terminated the exchange of nude photos in Ohio'; 'she is the head of the campaign against sexting'.

Part (g) was very well done. Candidates were generally able to explain what Jessica Logan did and why. However, a few candidates stated that 'she felt insulted' instead of stating that *she was insulted*. Many candidates also incorrectly stated that: 'the pictures were sent to MySpace and Facebook'; 'she closed her MySpace and Facebook account'; 'she started an organization against sexting'.

Part (h), on the description of the campaign being run to help young people avoid the dangers of *sexting*, was well done.

Recommendations for Teachers

- Provide students with more listening practice with timed exercises and allow students to use their own equipment rather than teacher-controlled equipment.
- Give students vocabulary recognition exercises and word association exercises as part of listening comprehension training.
- Have students practise listening for gist to improve overall comprehension skills rather than simply listing information.
- Where possible, try exercises that focus on students refining the structure of their responses, rather than just providing a correct response.
- Try short transcription exercises with students on topics from all three modules from very early in the CAPE programme.

Recommendations for Candidates

- Do as much independent listening as possible using online and other audio resources to hone listening skills (music, podcasts, music videos/videos, documentaries available). Make listening to the language part of your daily existence.
- Remember that responses must make logical sense in English.
- Read questions before listening to the audio.
- Consider the mark scheme in providing responses.
- Proofread responses to ensure logic and coherence.
- Write concise and precise responses to avoid ambiguity.

Paper 02 – Reading and Writing

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. For Passage 2, the questions were in Spanish and candidates were to respond in Spanish, using their own words.

Passage 1 – *La cultura de Bolivia*

This was a compulsory question which assessed candidates' ability to understand a passage in contemporary Spanish based on a topic of interest. Parts (a)–(f) required candidates to respond in English to questions asked in English. Parts (g)–(k) required candidates to provide synonyms taken from the passage for the items presented. This question was well answered by candidates. Approximately 60 per cent of the candidates scored in the 19–24 range.

Part (a) required candidates to identify two factors which account for Bolivia's mixed culture. This question was generally well answered. There were, however, those who misinterpreted the phrase *amerindios originarios*. As a result of the misinterpretation, responses were in some instances clumsy and inaccurate.

Part (b) asked candidates to say how geography influences the style of dress in Bolivia. The requirements of this question were understood but some candidates disregarded the influence of geography in their response. Many candidates simply attempted to translate the entire paragraph as their response. There were issues with vocabulary. Words giving problems were *ligera* (translated by many as ‘cotton’ or ‘linen’), *abrigadas* (translated as ‘abridged’, or ‘long’) and *confeccionados* (translated as *‘confeccioned’).

Part (c) required candidates to describe the hats worn by men. This question was also problematic as many candidates did not know the words *ala* and *ancha*. As a result, the description of the hat being ‘broad-brimmed’ was left out in the majority of cases. Most candidates were able to give the other two descriptions of the hat being made of *wicker* and *leather*. It was disheartening to see that even though the English equivalent for *mimbre* was given, some candidates omitted this detail. Some candidates failed to note that the question required a description of the hat and provided details on when it was worn. These additional details were deemed irrelevant and as such were disregarded by examiners.

Part (d) (i) required candidates to describe one cultural form that has not changed. There was almost universal success in the answering of this question.

Part (d) (ii) asked candidates to say why the cultural form has not changed. While most candidates were able to identify that geography was the reason for this, in many instances, the word *aislamiento* was unfamiliar. Some candidates translated the word as ‘location’ and ‘position’. Examiners accepted these interpretations. In other instances, however, the interpretations made no sense in the response. Some of the words seen were ‘aislanding’, ‘islanding’, ‘island-like’ and ‘ailment’.

Part (e), which asked candidates to say how music developed in Bolivia, was fairly well answered. Most responses were complete. In some instances, candidates provided information that was irrelevant to the question.

Parts (f) required candidates to identify four types of festivals celebrated in Bolivia. While this was generally well done, many candidates simply listed the actual festivals and celebrations rather than the type. Some candidates even provided celebrations that were not mentioned in the passage for example Valentine’s Day and Christmas. A few candidates wrote the Spanish terms in their answers, and because this passage required answers to be in English, these responses were not credited with marks.

Parts (g)–(k) required candidates to provide synonyms taken from the passage for given words. Most candidates were able to identify only three out of the five synonyms. The most problematic items in this section were Part (i) *diseños* which candidates gave as *tejidos* and Part (k) *como resultado de* which candidates gave as *a partir de*. There were also some instances of candidates giving complete phrases as synonyms rather than a single word. Candidates must be reminded that the synonyms they give must fit the given word. In a few cases, candidates wrote multiple words as their responses.

*An asterisk indicates an incorrect form, spelling or structure.

Passage 2 – *La avaricia y el hambre*

This was a compulsory question assessing candidates' ability to understand the passage in the target language and to respond in Spanish to questions asked in Spanish. Overall, performance on this paper was deemed satisfactory. Most candidates attempted to provide answers using their own words with some successfully manipulating the vocabulary to give coherent and complete answers. This question presented challenges to many candidates. There were, however, issues for some candidates in the answering of this question in their own words. These candidates took their answers directly from the passage and as a result of this, were heavily penalized. Many responses were weak in terms of expression and grammar, specifically in the use of tenses, subject/verb agreement and vocabulary usage.

While examiners rewarded the efforts of those who followed the clearly stated instruction of answering in their own words, there were instances where the answers were quite unclear, with instances of Anglicisms and often poor choice of synonyms. While candidates are not penalized for language, if the responses impede understanding of the answers, marks cannot be allotted.

Part (a) required candidates to respond to the question on *noticias recibió el mundo el 22 de octubre*. Many candidates responded well to this question. A commendable attempt was made to put the answer in one's own words. The question required candidates to give the number that showed the gravity of the problem. *Mil millones* was the response. However, some candidates used words such as *muchedumbre* and *muchas personas* which did not reflect the severity of the problem. Examiners disregarded these as suitable synonyms.

Part (b) asked candidates to say why the news *son sorprendentes*. Most candidates were able to give the correct response but far too many candidates took their answers directly from the passage. In some cases, only the verb *ha aumentado* was changed and in the majority of cases the replacement word was grammatically incorrect.

Part (c) required candidates to explain the *aumento del precio de granos*. This question posed the greatest challenge for candidates. While most of them were able to say the prices were affected by the *sequía* and *escasez*, many candidates misinterpreted the phrase *la tendencia de utilizar los alimentos como un vehículo financiero especulativo*. Many candidates used *carro* and *coche* to substitute for *vehículo* but the interpretation of the point was wrong. There was a very high incidence of lifting of the response from the passage.

Part (d) asked candidates to say how *han afectado las acciones de los especuladores financieros el precio de trigo*. In many instances, the entire fourth paragraph was lifted, thereby giving many unnecessary details. For those candidates who were able to zero in on the response, the answer again was lifted. Only a few candidates attempted to rephrase their answer.

Part (e) required candidates to say *qué declara Las Naciones Unidas para la Alimentación y la Agricultura*. Many candidates were able to provide the full answer for this question. Despite this, however, there was a still a high rate of lifting.

Part (f) asked why *se pone énfasis en Bolivia*. This was well handled by candidates. The majority of candidates were able to identify the three points of the answer.

Part (g) asked candidates to give their opinion on *qué se podría hacer para acabar con el hambre mundial*. Many gave answers that were well thought out and well expressed. Those who were not awarded with full marks were those who did not give enough explanation or information on the topic.

Careful attention must be paid to the marks allotted and responses given must be more than a sentence or two.

Recommendations

- Candidates need to pay attention to the instructions given for each passage. Answers must be in the specified language. If this is disregarded, their response to the question will not be considered.
- Candidates need to pay attention to the specific requirements of the question. In too many instances candidates are failing to do what the questions ask. For example, if the questions ask the candidates to *explain*, many candidates may simply list points without giving an *explanation* of the point.
- Candidates need to pay attention to the mark scheme. Generally, marks are based on the number of points required for a response. Many times, candidates lose marks for not providing enough information.
- Students need to be taught to zero in on the points for their responses. Many times, students give too many additional details in their responses. While these responses are not marked down for irrelevant details, students are to be reminded that this would take a lot of additional time that could be used in other sections of the paper.
- A recurrent problem in Passage 2 of this paper is the disregard of the instruction of answering in one's own words. Candidates are heavily penalized for these responses. Candidates must be encouraged to provide answers in their own words.
- Candidates must be encouraged to give suitable responses for the final question in Passage 2. This can only be achieved through practice. Too many times, the problem with the answers for this question is that the responses are very inadequate. In other cases, the responses are copied directly from the passage and these will not be credited with many marks.

Section B – Essays

Candidates were required to write an essay, in Spanish, of 250–300 words, on one of five topics. This section assessed candidates' ability to express themselves in Spanish in an analytical and logical manner related to the theme as outlined in Module 2 of the syllabus. Candidates were assessed on content and presentation (organization and coverage of the topic, relevance and inclusion of facts, ideas and opinions) and correctness of expression (range of vocabulary and idioms as well as accuracy of grammatical structures).

It is noteworthy that most candidates were able to answer the questions. The level of competence ranged from excellent to weak. For the most part, candidates were able to master the grammatical structures and vocabulary. Accentuation and spelling where the words were similar to the mother tongue made it a challenging exercise for some candidates to master. A few candidates used the wording of the question as their introduction and conclusion. It was noted however, that candidates generally had proper essay format as was evidenced by their introduction, their clearly stated points and conclusion. There were several excellent essays that clearly demonstrated that candidates understood the question, showed maturity of thought, reasoning and essay analysis and were able to write coherently.

| Question | Percentage of candidates attempting question |
|----------|--|
| 3 | 21 |
| 4 | 32 |
| 5 | 04 |
| 6 | 05 |
| 7 | 38 |

Question 3

Hay más desventajas que ventajas asociadas con los alimentos modificados. Discute.

This question was quite straightforward and candidates were able to handle the question extremely well and were well informed. Candidates' performance ranged from satisfactory to excellent. They were able to show both sides of the argument and show numerous examples and facts concerning genetically modified foods. Such candidates showed evidence of thorough research from recent studies.

Some common errors in expression that were produced by candidates included:

- *Genética*
- *Contenta* (content)
- *Los humanos*
- *Las vidas*
- *Las gentes*
- *Muchos ventajas*
- *Hambriento*
- *El nivel de cosecha producida*
- *Comida modificado*
- *Diete* (diet)
- *Beneficial*
- *Plaguicidas* (pesticides)
- *Aliemiento / ailmentos*

Question 4

Los avances tecnológicos no han mejorado nuestra vida. ¿Estás de acuerdo?

This was the second most popular question attempted by candidates and it was handled quite well in some cases. Outstanding candidates displayed excellent organization and coverage of topic and produced essays that were well argued and structured. The essays included facts, ideas and opinions and candidates were able to show a plethora of examples of technological advances and how they have improved our lives. There was a wide range of structures and vocabulary and excellent use of idioms. However many candidates confused *Haber* with *Tener* in the formation of the perfect tense. In general, candidates were able to show how technology has improved our lives in every facet: *communication, education, recreation, business* and *health*. Some candidates were also able to show that technology did not necessarily improve our lives in terms of *obesity, physical and mental laziness and lack of socialization*.

Some common errors in expression that were produced by candidates included:

- *Hay muchos beneficiales de los tecnologicos*
- *Las sistemas de communication son amables*
- *Todo información pueden ahorrar en la computadora*
- *Ayudo con economizando tiempo*
- *Las mujeres son puede mejorar ten cuidado su familia y ha tiempo dormir*
- *Las programmas*
- *Ayudar preventa morir*
- *La dia diaria*
- *Son buen para nosotras salud*

Question 5

La obesidad es una enfermedad genética. ¿Estás de acuerdo?

This was the least popular question among candidates. The performance of the four per cent who attempted this question ranged from satisfactory to excellent. Candidates were able to balance the arguments and show that the causes of obesity were both genetic and as a result of lifestyle choices.

Some common errors in expression that were produced by candidates included:

- *Son muy muy muy grandes*
- *Mucho grandes*
- *En sus proporcionales derechos*

Question 6

El clonaje humano es moralmente legítimo. ¿Qué piensas de esta afirmación?

This was not a popular choice of candidates but performance ranged from satisfactory to excellent. Candidates who attempted this question disagreed with the statement that cloning is morally legitimate, stating that humans should not play God and create a life in order to give life to someone else. They also indicated that cloning is economically wasteful since there are other aspects of humanity that can be addressed. However, candidates displayed problems with direct and indirect object pronouns.

Some common errors in expression that were produced by candidates included:

- *Jugar dios*
- *Es egoísta de producir los humanos les asesinar*
- *Inmoral*

Question 7

La tecnología no ha contribuido significativamente a la vida humana. ¿Cuál es tu opinión?

This question was the most popular question. Marks ranged from minimal to excellent. Many candidates who attempted this question used information that overlapped from question four. Most of these candidates however did not make the link between *contribuido significativamente a la vida humana* (in Question 4) and *mejorado nuestra vida* (Question 7). Examiners expected to see more of the medical and scientific advances as well as the educational advances which have contributed to making human life better.

Some common errors in expression that were produced by candidates included:

- *La tecnología juega un papel importante*
- *Porque de la tecnología*
- *Hay muchos tipos de aeroplanos*
- *El viaje ha fui más fácil*
- *La tecnología ha hecho la vida menos difícil para nos*
- *La introducción de tecnología ha causa no trabajados*
- *Las machines es más rápido*
- *Ya no hacemos tener esperar en su carro*

Recommendations for Students

- Read questions properly and create an essay plan.
- Underline the key words and link arguments to key words, so as to ensure correct interpretation of the question.
- Use statistics and factual information to support the positions taken.
- Pay attention to key areas such as spelling, agreement, negatives, position of words, accentuation, grammatical structures, conjugation of verbs, the perfect tense, the subjunctive mood and omission of the definite and indefinite articles.
- Practise more essay writing.
- Stay within the word limit.

Recommendations for Teachers

- Stress grammatical correctness, in particular the perfect tense and the subjunctive mood.
- Review the mark scheme.
- Discuss with students the topics in each module.
- Develop writing skills of students.
- Find different ways to approach topics, for example, do more debates in the classroom.

Paper 03 – Literary Analysis and Themes

Section A – Literary Analysis

In Section A, candidates were required to respond to one of four possible extracts taken from the prescribed texts on the syllabus. Each question comprised four parts (a,b,c,d). These questions focused on literary analysis of given passages and asked candidates to relate the plot, analyse characters from the extract, comment on narrative technique and setting, and identify literary devices and themes found in the given passage, with one question asking candidates to relate aspects of the extract to the rest of the prescribed text. All answers were required to be in Spanish.

Question Popularity

| QUESTION # | POPULARITY |
|---|------------|
| 1. La lluvia amarilla | 5 % |
| 2. El llano en llamas | 21 % |
| 3. Chombo | 4 % |
| 4. El coronel no tiene quien le escriba | 70 % |

Candidates generally demonstrated a clear knowledge of the texts studied, as they were able to recall facts from the entire text. However, some of these facts were not pertinent to the question given and as such were considered unnecessary and were not awarded any additional marks. Candidates needed to show greater care in selecting support material for their responses. Grammatical accuracy continued to be an area of concern, especially at the level of Unit 2. There was marked improvement, however, in candidates' expression.

Question Performance Breakdown

| RANGE | QUES 1 | QUES 2 | QUES 3 | QUES 4 |
|-------|--------|--------|--------|--------|
| 16 | 0% | 3% | 0% | 1% |
| 14-15 | 0% | 9% | 11% | 11% |
| 12-13 | 7% | 12% | 6% | 17% |
| 9-11 | 34% | 20% | 22% | 30% |
| 7-8 | 19% | 18% | 22% | 19% |
| 4-6 | 23% | 23% | 17% | 17% |
| 1-3 | 7% | 13% | 22% | 4% |
| 0 | 7% | 2% | 0% | 1% |
| NR | 3% | 0% | 0% | 0% |

Question 1: *La lluvia amarilla*

This question was not popular. In Part (a), candidates were able to identify first-person narration but were not always able to clearly justify their response. In a few cases, candidates confused narrative point of view with plot. Candidates need to be more aware of the fact that with a first-person narrative point of view, the story is being told from the perspective of the narrator and is therefore a more subjective one.

In response to Part (b), most candidates understood the fear factor but some felt that the protagonist was afraid of someone else; another person. Some seemed not to have understood that he was afraid of himself and of going crazy in his solitude. A few candidates mistakenly assumed that the protagonist had already succumbed to madness.

Part (c) was generally better answered. Most candidates were able to identify the tone of sadness and provide accurate citations from the text.

For Part (d), not many candidates were able to explain the link between the environment and the protagonist's state of life. While they were able to identify his solitude, they were unable to connect *el río encharcado* to the stagnation of his life.

Question 2: *El llano en llamas*

In Part (a), candidates were generally able to identify the first-person narrative point of view and the subjectivity of such a perspective. They were also able to accurately justify their response with the most popular citation being *Yo sé ahora...* Candidates continue to provide generic, possibly learned by rote, explanations of narrative point of view without paying particular attention to explaining how it is used in the extract given.

Performance on Part (b) was quite good. Most candidates were able to identify that Natalia and the narrator were remorseful, guilty, deceitful and selfish. Explanations given were appropriate and accurately justified the responses given. Candidates were also able to recognize why Natalia and the narrator wanted Tanilo dead.

Part (c) was well answered. The majority of candidates were able to identify a tone of remorse or guilt and provided accurate examples from the text.

For Part (d), Nature was seen as facilitating the deceit of Natalia and the narrator. Because of their general knowledge of the story, some candidates identified Nature as hostile and contributing to the suffering of

Tanilo. They were able to aptly illustrate the role of Nature in other stories such as ‘*Nos han dado la tierra*’ and ‘*Es que somos muy pobres.*’

Question 3: Chombo

Although few candidates attempted this question, those who did, performed very well. For Part (a), candidates were able to identify a third-person narrator who is omniscient and objective. Some candidates are still not aware of the term *omniscient*. Candidates were able to justify their responses with an appropriate explanation.

In Part (b), candidates were successful in identifying the senses and provided appropriate examples. Candidates are reminded to read questions carefully to ensure that examples are taken from the stipulated paragraph.

For Part (c) (i), the majority of candidates correctly identified the literary device as a simile.

In Part (c) (ii), most candidates were able to identify the comparison made between the people and the ants, in terms of numbers and movement. However, many failed to recognize the *anonymity of the people*.

In Part (d), candidates were generally able to identify the discrimination faced by the black West Indians but explanations given were superficial. Candidates failed to explain the fact that the blacks had contributed significantly to the development of the country, yet the Panamanian people ignored them and rejected their black heroes and symbols.

Question 4: El coronel no tiene quien le escriba

This was clearly the most popular question attempted by candidates. Overall performance was very good. In Part (a), the majority of candidates identified a third-person narrator and recognized that he was omniscient and objective. However, many candidates simplistically felt that the use of *el coronel* and *el médico* was enough justification for a third-person narrative point of view, and therefore could not be awarded marks.

For Part (b), most candidates were able to identify the main events of the plot. Some candidates engaged in storytelling which did not outline the plot of the given extract. Candidates need to be more succinct when outlining the plot of the excerpt.

In response to Part (c), the most popular responses were *paciente* and *optimista*. Candidates, however, need to be more careful when selecting the supporting quotations, ensuring that they relate to the particular quality identified.

With respect to Part (d), candidates either regurgitated the plot of the extract or the qualities of the colonel identified in Part (c). Where candidates were able to recognize the contrast between the colonel and his wife, it was explained simply as opposites. For example, where the colonel was described as *optimista*, his wife was simply described as *pesimista*. Not many candidates were able to recognize the injustice and corruption of the government in punishing the veterans by not paying the agreed upon pension.

Recommendations

- No English is allowed in Section A. Candidates are therefore advised to respond in Spanish only.
- Candidates should avoid using the citations to give the sequence of events. Citations should be used to support answers, not just lifted out and written back as answers in themselves.

- Candidates should try to keep the length of the response commensurate with the number of marks awarded for the question. Some candidates wrote an entire page to respond to one part of a question and yet there was very little information for which marks could be awarded.

Section B – Themes

Candidates were required to write an essay, of 350–400 words, in English, on one of the questions relating to the theme *La vida rural* or *Conflictos políticos y sociales en Hispanoamérica*. They were also required to use one of the prescribed texts for the theme selected and discuss issues relevant to the question. Candidates were awarded marks for Knowledge and Understanding (16 marks), Application of Knowledge (9 marks) and Organization of Information (7 marks).

Overall, candidate performance in this section was considered satisfactory to good.

Question 5

Nature is a test of one's strength and will to live. Discuss.

This was the most popular question; it was attempted by 59 per cent of the candidates. Performance on this section was generally satisfactory. Candidates were required to show how elements of nature presented challenges to man's quest for survival and how the characters responded to these obstacles. The majority of candidates chose *El llano en llamas* to respond to this question, referring to appropriate stories. Although most candidates were able to identify the extremities of nature, some neglected to state how they threatened man's existence. Candidates who responded to the question using *La lluvia amarilla* fell into two general categories:

- Candidates who gave summaries of the text
- Candidates who identified specific elements of nature and showed how the characters' life was made intolerable.

Question 6

Improvement in rural life can only come through innovations. Discuss.

This was the least popular question; it was attempted by seven per cent of the candidates, the majority of whom scored in the weak range. Candidates were required to demonstrate an understanding of the term *innovations* as new ideas or ways of doing something and how they are essential to improving the quality of life in rural areas. Most candidates who responded to this question used *El llano en llamas* and the majority of responses focused on the harshness of nature rather than showing evidence to respond to the question posed. Candidates found it difficult to identify instances of innovations in the stories where applicable. Some candidates, however, cleverly opted to show that improvements were not only possible through innovations but through other ways such as solidarity/removal of the human conflict (for example, "*La cuesta de las comadres*"), government investing in its citizens. *La lluvia amarilla* was found to be more challenging to candidates who responded to this question.

Question 7

The socioeconomic policies of Latin American governments have ensured a better quality of life for all. Discuss.

Fifteen per cent of the candidates attempted this question, 45 per cent of whom scored above the satisfactory range. In this question, candidates were required to determine what the socioeconomic policies of the government were and how these either made life better or worse for the citizens. Candidates should have also noted the word *all* in the question as they may have been able to show that these policies benefited some and not all. Candidates who used *Chombo* wrote significantly better responses. They were able to identify government policies or lack thereof, in relation to housing, employment, citizenship, health care and education and how these policies discriminated against Afro Antilleans, thus denying them an improved quality of life.

Some candidates who used *El Coronel no tiene quien le escriba* were clear in identifying governmental policies like martial law (curfew/restriction of movement), decision not to pay veterans like the colonel a pension, social inequalities and so on which denied the citizens basic rights. However, some candidates were unable to identify socioeconomic policies and wrote on the life of the colonel.

Question 8

Laws and regulations are mechanisms used by governments to repress their citizens and deny them true justice. Discuss.

This was the second most popular question. It was attempted by 19 per cent of the candidates, of whom 42 per cent scored above the satisfactory range. Candidates were required to identify laws and regulations enforced by the government and their impact on the citizens. Candidates who used *Chombo* generally wrote better responses. They were able to identify laws and regulations in relation to employment, education, health care and migration. They also showed how these discriminatory laws repressed the Afro-Antillean migrants and their descendants, denying them justice. Candidates using *El Coronel no tiene quien le escriba*, were able to identify governmental regulations such as the various aspects of martial law and censorship which oppressed the majority of the citizens. Candidates were also able to show the bureaucracy that hindered the colonel from receiving the pension that was rightfully due to him. However, they failed to make the distinction between the state and the church regarding censorship of the movies.

Candidates' Strengths

- Some candidates demonstrated sound knowledge of the text studied and commendable analytical skills. They were able to identify the issues in the text relevant to the question posed and discuss them using solid supporting details.
- Good or excellent essays included a brief introduction with a well-constructed thesis, three to five well-supported points with a counterargument, and a brief conclusion.
- Some candidates made appropriate use of quotations. Quotations generally supported the points made and were well integrated into the essay.

Candidates' Weaknesses

- Some essays were mere summaries of the text instead of analysis.
- Some essays exceeded the word limit of 350–400 words.
- Some essays were padded with long, incomplete or irrelevant quotations as well as historical and philosophical perspectives.
- Some responses were riddled with inaccuracies in content, structure, expression, spelling or grammar.
- Writing a general essay instead of a thematic essay

- Using the same text in Sections A and B
- Writing the essay in Spanish
- Not responding to Section B

Suggestions and Recommendations for Teachers

Teachers should:

- Ensure that they identify and discuss the issues related to the theme within the chosen text. Historical and philosophical perspectives, though necessary for class discussion, do not need to appear in the written examination
- Refrain from primarily training students based on past essays as students seek to regurgitate information, regardless of the question set.
- Advise students to be more analytical in their responses instead of using quotations to express their points.
- Advise students to take their time in reading and selecting questions carefully, and identifying key words within the question, as some texts are more appropriate than others for certain questions.
- Advise students to stay within the word limit as examiners do not read beyond the stipulated word limit.
- Cultivate practices of proper essay writing — Introduction/Body/Conclusion.
- Advise students that an excellent response should include
 - (i) a brief introduction with a clear thesis statement
 - (ii) four or five solid points, supported by concise, appropriate, brief and complete quotes, and an informed personal opinion, each in a new paragraph, one of which should be a counterpoint to provide balance in the response
 - (iii) a brief conclusion.

Paper 04 – School-Based Assessment

This paper required students to (i) make an oral presentation on their topic of choice within the framework of the three modules, and (ii) engage in conversation with the examiner on the topic as well as on current issues.

As in Unit 1, the majority of students scored between 29 and 45.

Topics chosen were generally related to the unit and covered a fairly wide range. The presentations for the most part, showed that individual work was done by students themselves and were appropriate for the level and for creative development.

However, in a few cases topic statements were too general; for example, *‘El Terrorismo’*, *‘La obesidad’*, *‘El Turismo en Venezuela’*. One topic that came closer to the mark spoke to *‘¿Cómo se usa la ciencia y la tecnología para combatir la obesidad en España?’*

In most cases examiners adhered to the stipulated time. Sometimes, however, the presentations were too long, and this resulted in the interview going over the allotted time of fifteen minutes or if the time were adhered to, the conversation was truncated.

Examiners, generally, spoke at a natural pace, maintained a conversational tone and provided the students with positive reinforcement. The questions allowed for students to use a wide range of vocabulary and

addressed a variety of themes. Students were found to be generally prepared and to have researched their presentations well. Statistics were given and the topics referred to Spanish-speaking countries. Their responses, in conversation, were mostly satisfactory.

There were some instances where students had difficulty expressing their views in Spanish. They obviously knew what they wanted to say but were not able to find the right words or phrases.

Also, there were some inconsistencies in expression, pronunciation and use of vocabulary and limitations in students' grasp of essential structures that affected the meaning of what they wanted to say.

Nevertheless, the language was quite good for the most part and, in a few cases, even excellent.

Further Comments

Overall, there seems to be a need for further practice in the classroom to give students an opportunity to express opinions on the various topics in the programme.

All examiners need to adhere to the allotted time; especially for the topic and general conversation, which carry more weight.

Again, examiners need to refrain from prompting during the examination and avoid being too deliberate in articulating their questions, thus distorting the language.

Recommendation for Teachers

- Examiners should avoid asking too many questions that would most logically elicit a 'yes' or 'no' answer.
- Examiners should encourage students to take the initiative in meaningful exchanges in the conversation.
- Examiners should resist the temptation to extend themselves in the conversation and give priority to the student expressing his or her point of view.
- Examiners should familiarize themselves with the stipulations and recommendations of the syllabus and should be quite clear on the parameters of the marking scheme.
- Examiners should seek to enhance the level of objectivity in their marking.
- Examiners should make their sample submissions on a single CD and indicate the programme used for recording.
- Examiners should make a concerted effort to reduce extraneous noises and double-check the quality of the recordings.
- Examiners should be vigilant as to the security and accuracy of the moderation sheets before submission.