

SPANISH (SYLLABUS B)

Paper 3035/01

Translation and Composition

General comments

Candidates' performance was very similar to that seen in previous sessions, although it is pleasing to note that the vast majority of candidates followed the rubrics correctly and chose question options sensibly. Centres had prepared their candidates for the type of questions set and had given guidance in how to tackle them. It is, however, important to emphasise the importance of counting the number of words used as Examiners only mark up to the maximum word limit. This means that any work which exceeds the limit can not gain any marks.

Comments on specific questions

Question 1: Picture essay

The scenario of children being looked after whilst their parents are out, and not being compliant, was well narrated. There were a number of interpretations regarding who the babysitters were, ranging from neighbours to family members, friends or work colleagues of one of the parents. In most cases the parents had no idea how their children behaved when left in someone else's care. Most of the babysitters were too polite to tell the truth, which led in some cases to agreeing to look after the children again.

There were no difficulties in telling the story and many candidates showed understanding of both preterite and imperfect tenses. Some managed to include dialogue to widen the range of tenses. It was very noticeable which Centres had noticed the value of including complex structures which attract more marks, such as:

gustar/encantar etc. used correctly
verbs followed by prepositions and another infinitive
conjunctions
negatives such as *nadie/nunca*

Question 2

(a) Letter

This was the most popular option of the three. There were many interesting pieces inviting film stars and singers to take part in a number of events including concerts and special parties. Most candidates knew how to set out a letter correctly.

There were a small number of letters where candidates were unsure of the correct form of address – *tú* or *usted* – and used both. Another unexpected error was the misuse of *vosotros*. The vocabulary required was within the experience of most candidates and the context gave ample opportunity for able candidates to use a variety of tenses in explaining the background to the invitation and plans for the day.

(b) Conversation

This option requires specific practice and there were some good pieces where candidates were able to construct a realistic dialogue, formulating questions correctly and including a range of vocabulary. Those candidates who attempted this without previous training in the technique of writing a conversation found that they relied too much on the outline given in the title, struggled to form questions and included very few details. No credit is given for any 'narrative'.



(c) Essay

This was attempted by a good number of candidates. It was encouraging to read that most candidates were able to be positive about their school and found many good reasons for keeping it open. These went beyond the suggestions given about teachers and subjects to include location, atmosphere, kindness and friendliness of candidates and facilities.

The title and subject matter were within the experience of candidates and many made good use of a wide range of vocabulary. There were opportunities to use descriptive language for people and places and to express opinions and preferences.

Question 3: Translation into Spanish

As stated in previous reports, candidates should only choose this option if they have been prepared for it specifically, as translation is a different skill from essay writing.

There were some good translations, where candidates knew the vocabulary required and were able to give accurate renditions into Spanish. Close attention to detail is essential, for example, not missing the pluperfect in *I had revised ...*, noting *the blonde girl...*, *the head teacher arrived ..* Some otherwise competent candidates lost marks by missing such details. In this type of test, candidates need to be able to detect complex structures such as subjunctive clauses – *told us to sit down and continue ... asked us to go home and return ... we wanted the mouse to come back.* In such exercises, the main tense is usually the preterite and any use of the perfect for narration is not accepted.

Concluding comments

In the main, candidates were prepared appropriately for the examination. For future sessions, candidates may benefit from practising more complex sentence structures to include in their work and avoid repetition, which is not credited.



SPANISH (SYLLABUS B)

Paper 3035/02

Reading Comprehension

GENERAL COMMENTS

This autumn's paper 2 was well tackled by the large majority of candidates. As is usually the case, **Section 1** was completed confidently and well by most, particularly exercises 1 and 4. **Section 2** was also tackled very competently, with the top half of the candidates managing high marks in both exercises. And so it was left to the Cloze Test in **Section 3** to discriminate most pronouncedly between the strong and the weak: whereas the former could hope for 12 or more out of 20, the latter struggled to get a handful of marks, if that. Very few candidates obtained a total mark of below 20 out of 60 for the whole paper, the full range of total marks being from 14 to 58 out of 60. The large majority of the Centres are to be congratulated on doing an excellent job in preparing the candidates so thoroughly for this paper. Nearly all of the candidates tackled the exercises purposefully, really entering into the spirit of the questions and producing some first-rate answers to increasingly difficult questions, and an encouraging proportion did themselves justice with a fine total mark.

COMMENTS ON SPECIFIC QUESTIONS

Section 1

Exercise 1

This was done well by most candidates, though only about half of them obtained full marks on the exercise. There were several mistakes in **Question 1**, perhaps because candidates had not learnt the names of fruits, and several opted for C, perhaps because they were more accustomed to bananas. In **Question 3** several opted wrongly for C, perhaps because for them a storm meant snow. The correct answers were as follows:

Question 1 A Question 2 C Question 3 D Question 4 D Question 5 B

Exercise 2

This was less well done, around 40% of candidates scoring full marks. The most common error was in **Question 10**, perhaps because the answer was somewhat concealed in the final paragraph of the text, which did not mention *invierno*. The correct options were as follows:

Question 6 V Question 7 F Question 8 F Question 9 V Question 10 V

Exercise 3

This exercise was done well by some but not by others, with around 50% of candidates scoring full marks on it. The most common error was to write G (which was plausible, as it means the exit) as one of the answers. The correct answers were as follows:

Question 11 B Question 12 J Question 13 C Question 14 E Question 15 F

Exercise 4

This exercise proved an interesting challenge for many candidates. About one half of them managed to score 8 or more out of 10, and many of the rest scored between 5 and 7. Only the weakest scored below 50%. The exercise was marked generously, errors involving verb endings being usually tolerated, though the same leniency was not on offer in **Section 3**. Teachers should stress that questions follow the same order as the paragraphs, and so it is unlikely that **Question 23** would be referring back to material in the



middle of the text which has already been covered by other questions. The correct answers were along the following lines:

Question 16 *Hace unos meses.*

Question 17 *Por ser más rápido / Porque era más rápido.*

Question 18 *No le gustó la comida.*

Question 19 *En un centro de estudios.*

Question 20 (a) *Teníamos clases.* (b) *Fuimos a las pistas de esquí / Esquiábamos.*

Question 21 *Porque estaba cansado.*

Question 22 *Porque nunca lo había practicado antes.*

Question 23 (a) *Ganó un premio.* (b) *Lo premiaron por ser el estudiante que más había trabajado en las clases.*

Section 2

Exercise 1

This comprehension and correction exercise proved rather difficult for average or weak candidates, although there were plenty of strong candidates who scored full marks or just short. In addition, several quite weak candidates scored five out of five for the basic true-or-false ticks. The correct answers were along the following lines:

Question 24 **F** *No. Fue para visitar las fábricas de Konica.* The following was common but unacceptable: *Fue para la educación secundaria.*

Question 25 **F** *No. No le interesaba el maratón.*

Question 26 **V**

Question 27 **F** *No. Le gusta mucho la comida japonesa / Es aficionado a la cocina japonesa.* The following was common but unacceptable: *Se acostumbró a la cultura japonesa.*

Question 28 **V**

Exercise 2

This comprehension exercise proved rather demanding for average or weak candidates, although numerous strong candidates scored full marks or just short. It was necessary for candidates to use verbs that were correctly altered so as to fit the sense of what the answer had to convey, and no marks were awarded where this was not attempted, especially where candidates just lifted relevant phrases from the text without amending the verbs. The correct answers were along the following lines:

Question 29 *Gente de todas las edades se reúne en un mismo edificio para aprovechar sus horas libres.*

Question 30 *Hay muchos restaurantes / Se puede conocer la cocina de países exóticos.*

Question 31 *Jugar en el parque infantil.*

Question 32 *Es un lugar seguro (para dejar a los hijos).*

Question 33 *Poder ver las películas más recientes / Ver el último estreno / Ir al cine.*

Question 34

(i) *La temperatura es agradable.*

(ii) *No hace falta paraguas / "No tienes que preocuparte por el paraguas".*

Section 3

Exercise 1

The Cloze test, of similar difficulty to the one in last year's paper, still proved a very demanding exercise for most candidates. Only 40% scored half marks or more, and no candidate managed to obtain full marks. The following options were deemed to be correct and were awarded the mark:

Question 35 *cómo*

Question 36 *cuando*

Question 37 *había / teníamos / existía / hay*

Question 38 *ir / irnos*

Question 39 *quedaba / estaba / está*

Question 40 *a / sobre*

Question 41 *en*

Question 42 *para*



- Question 43** *a*
Question 44 *nos / les*
Question 45 *desde*
Question 46 *los / sus / tener*
Question 47 *ellos / éstos / ésos / aquellos*
Question 48 *iba / íbamos / fuimos / anduvimos / iríamos / volvíamos*
Question 49 *se*
Question 50 *por / en / a / hacia / hasta*
Question 51 *con / casi*
Question 52 *Qué / Cuántas / Muchas / Buenas*
Question 53 *nos*
Question 54 *sobre / hacíamos*

