

Examiners' Report
June 2013

GCE English Language 6EN01 01

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Introduction

The paper has two sections which invite candidates to demonstrate their knowledge and understanding of linguistic concepts across all ability ranges.

Section A is progressive. It allows candidates to test the range of their skills by building on concepts and language features over four questions.

Section B offers an opportunity for extended analysis and discussion in a longer single comparative question.

In this series many candidates managed time effectively and appeared very well prepared for the demands of each question. The candidates engaged particularly well with section A. It seemed that they had been prepared very well for the progressive nature of the exam, as the scripts accumulated into a successful attack on the forensic nature of Question 4. It was evident that candidates were using the terminology signposted in Question 1, the contextual factors identified in Question 2, and their application of language in Question 3 to generate a thoughtful analysis in Question 4.

Centres should be aware that the amount of space provided in the booklet is more than ample for an effective answer. Responses should be extensive enough to show understanding of the assessment objectives. However, candidates are not advantaged by over-writing.

The purpose of this report is to give an insight into the ways in which this examination has been assessed. A general outline of the patterns emerging for each question is described.

Before starting to write, candidates should not only read all the texts, but should also read through the five questions. They should have a clear understanding of how the questions differ before tackling each one.

Question 1: candidates must focus only on the underlined material. There are no marks for observing what is outside the highlighted area. Also the example must be from the source booklet and may not be an example drawn from the candidate's own knowledge or understanding.

Question 2: candidates should consider the over-arching contextual factors of holiday brochures (or whatever the genre the series focuses on). The recommended factors are field, function, tenor and mode. However, we are very open to alternative systems (e.g. audience and purpose) as a way of embracing the multitude of approaches to teaching and learning.

Question 3: the focus for this question moves to particular sub-groups for more detailed comment. Candidates need to focus on the language features used within the texts and support this with critical discussion.

Question 4: this question is synoptic of section A. Candidates should note the content of their investigations for the previous questions and switch their attention to the sub-group, which has not been tackled.

Question 5: candidates should note that AO2 marks are for discussion of presentation of self through language issues and AO3 marks are for their exploration of the presentation of self through the contextual factors and key constituents. Candidates should aim to balance the exploration of each text equally.

Question 1

This question aims to test the candidate's knowledge and understanding of linguistic terminology.

There are 15 marks drawn from AO1.

AO1: 'Select and apply a range of linguistic methods to communicate relevant knowledge using appropriate terminology and coherent and accurate written expression'. Bold font is used to illustrate the language feature that the candidates are required to comment on.

For this series the suggested responses were as follows:

- (a) Adjective function / compound word / alliteration
- (b) Neologism / abstract noun / complement colloquial
- (c) Proper noun / shared knowledge / comparison
- (d) Noun phrase / pre-modification / subject of clause
- (e) Possessive pronoun / deixis.

Most candidates responded well to this question. However, we wish to remind centres that the examining team cannot give a mark to a candidate who presents a whole quotation for assessment, as examiners are unable to pick out the language feature from the quotation. There were still some scripts where a whole quotation was copied, leaving the examining team to identify the feature. This was not awarded and many candidates lost marks, because they had not presented their ideas for assessment clearly. Candidates must identify the language feature to be examined and underline it, so that the examiner can be certain. Also if a quotation is featured with an incorrect underlining, the examiner cannot accept another correct feature present in the chosen example.

Other problems occurred when candidates commented on partial elements of the underlined example: e.g. the definite article of 'the world famous jacket potato shop'. This was not awarded, despite the underlining concept of 'definiteness' underpinning the deictic function. It is essential that candidates comment on the underlined feature as a whole to gain marks.

Despite some candidates responding in this way, it was also evident that many centres had in fact addressed the issue. Most scripts showed a concerted effort to underline the chosen feature and it was much clearer this series which aspect of the quotation was being presented. Examiners greatly appreciated this.

Here is an overview of the responses to each question:

- (a) Many candidates scored full marks here. Popular responses were adjective, metaphorical language, modifiers, compound word, collocation, and alliteration.
- (b) Mostly candidates identified the noun and identified neologism, complement, colloquial and slang. Many tried to discuss the morphology of this word. There were also attempts to transcribe this word with IPA. This was not awarded as the mode is written and there is no indication of how this might be pronounced.
- (c) This was again a high scoring question. Mostly candidates identified the proper noun and the comparison. Other responses were the semantic fields of football and celebrity.
- (d) Many candidates identified the noun phrase and modification. Some candidates identified this as deixis and this was awarded.

(e) Many candidates scored full marks. Popular responses were the possessive and second person pronoun, direct address, inclusiveness and determiner.

Centres had clearly addressed the historical misuse of context dependency, syllables and non-terminological description, as few scripts of this nature were apparent. Thank you for helping candidates to be successful on this question.

Question 2

This question draws marks for AO3.

AO3: 'Analyse and evaluate the influence of contextual factors on the production and reception of spoken and written language, showing knowledge of the key constituents of language'.

This question was answered effectively; most candidates were awarded within band 2. Most candidates used the MFFT framework to good effect. Less successful responses focussed on one group, which led to repetition. Also many candidates veered into analysis of the key constituents, which is not awarded for this question. There were many responses in the lower bands which took the shape of 'who liked to do what on holiday', involving under-developed stereotyping.

Responses at the top of the range recognised that holiday brochures did not actually sell holidays. Rather, they sold shared cultural references, converging with the target audience, which resulted in sales. There was often an awareness of multiple overlapping purposes with tenor being a key central pin. These responses were well exemplified with evidence based features.

This series showed an increase in some candidates spending a disproportionate amount of time on this question, writing too much in a repetitive way. Some candidates could benefit from being reminded that this is a question about contextual factors. To maximise performance, candidates need to analyse the contextual factors and use the language features as examples.

In terms of function, all the facts are to inform and persuade the reader

about the holiday destination and hopefully make them want to book it. So the language used will ^{is} be very positive and ~~leasty~~, another contextual fac upbeat.



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The candidate is clearly aware of the function of holiday brochures and links information and sales.



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Examiner Tip

This response could be developed through a more in-depth enquiry of the role of information. As a holiday is an intangible commodity at the point of sale, the candidate might consider the role of information in making the experience imaginable. The candidate recognises that the language needs to be 'positive and upbeat'. Perhaps if the candidate had given examples these might have scaffolded the discussion of this concept and increased the mark.

Question 3

Here candidates are marked for both AO2 and AO3. There are 5 marks for each assessment objective.

AO2: 'Demonstrate a critical understanding of a range of concepts and issues related to the construction of meanings in spoken and written language, using knowledge of linguistic approaches'.

AO3: 'Analyse and evaluate the influence of contextual factors on the production and reception of spoken and written language, showing knowledge of the key constituents of language'.

There were some very good responses to this question.

In lower bands, candidates often discussed 'who liked to do what on holiday and with how much money'. Also, there were a number of candidates who recognised language features but failed to link these to any discussion beyond identifying similarities and differences between the groups.

However, there were some sophisticated and developed responses, showing an understanding such as the effect of language features on the target audience, discussing face and convergence. Often candidates would mention sentence types but in sweeping and general ways, failing to link these language features to discussion of the contextual factors or issues. Better responses identified differences in each group and analysed how each group identified their target audience, discussing the crafting of lexical choice and the synthetic personalization of the illusion of tenor.

Moving on to Group C, the purpose of Group C is to tell the readers about the available cruises which points out at adventurous people. In this case, the semantic field of this brochure is aimed at cruise lovers. The writer's grammar of ellipses 'Don't miss...' gives the idea of that there's a lot to be experienced which instantly grabs the readers attention.



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Here, the candidate tries to link the purpose with the reader and the language. The candidate imagines a holiday-maker for the cruise market as 'adventurous' and then attempts to link the ellipsis to this. There is an implied sense that the 'adventurous' like excitement.



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Had this candidate taken this further and developed a discussion of the imperative, as a means of anchoring the persuasive strategy through a sense of urgency, this would have pushed this score to the top of the band.

Question 4

There are two assessment objectives for this question: AO2 and AO3. There are 5 marks for AO2 and 10 for AO3.

AO2: 'Demonstrate a critical understanding of a range of concepts and issues related to the construction of meanings in spoken and written language, using knowledge of linguistic approaches'.

AO3: 'Analyse and evaluate the influence of contextual factors on the production and reception of spoken and written language, showing knowledge of the key constituents of language'.

Candidates in this series showed awareness of the synoptic nature of this question. They appeared to draw on the ideas and issues explored within previous questions.

There were three key approaches: first, an analysis of the mystery texts with an astute discussion of the sociolect of the language. Second, some candidates provided an overview and systematically favoured and discounted their choice of grouping. The final approach compared the mystery text with the language features of the sources. Each response had its own merits and took the shape of a range of scores across all the bands.

The lower bands were characterised by the use of everyday terms with guessing and predicting, often giving reasons why their choices were correct. Also, these bands lacked an awareness of the structural approach to analysis, often identifying their choice of grouping based on reference to Kavos.

In middling bands candidates tended to focus on the semantic meanings of lexis and grammar but with an awareness of cultural and personal references emerging in the discussion. Many limited their discussion to lexical choice and this reluctance to tackle grammar kept the scoring in band 2.

Top band responses seemed to understand the use of direct address and linked this to synthetic personalisation, particularly with the source texts. There was a clear understanding of subtle use of imperatives linked to persuasion and purpose.

The beach would attract both young people and families, as would a 'lazy, lazy day'. However, young people on a party holiday are unlikely to be at the beach before mid-day, so this suggests that it may be more suitable for a relaxing family holiday.



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This candidate attempts to link a text to the target audience. However, the discussion and evidence are presented in everyday terms.



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For this approach, the candidate might have looked at the writer's use of the intended audience's language and linked the use of sociolect to the young. Had 'lazy day' been cited as part of the adverbial, or even referred to the modifier, this would have shown linguistic understanding. The idea that young people are unlikely to be at the beach before mid-day is a personal response and needs linking to evidence.

Question 5

In this question three assessment objectives are assessed: AO1 has 10 marks, AO2 has 15 marks and AO3 has 25 marks.

AO1: 'Select and apply a range of linguistic methods to communicate relevant knowledge using appropriate terminology and coherent accurate written expression'.

AO2: 'Demonstrate a critical understanding of a range of concepts and issues related to the construction of meanings in spoken and written language, using knowledge of linguistic approaches'.

AO3: 'Analyse and evaluate the influence of contextual factors on the production and reception of spoken and written language, showing knowledge of the key constituents of language'.

Most candidates explored the presentation of self to some extent and many showed a reasonably detailed understanding of mode, tone and language use. Although there was a slight bias in favour of analysing text A over text B, candidates mostly managed to compare and contrast effectively.

In lower bands, candidates appeared judgmental and made vague claims about theories. There was the usual use of gender theory and Grice. However, many candidates tackled Grice without awareness that neither text was a conversation. There was no decrease in the value judgements emerging through a misguided attempt to address the presentation of self: for example, one text invited ideas about a clueless, rude and bullying Head of English, whilst the other text drew out thoughts of snobby, pretentious hippies.

In middling bands scripts went beyond statements of planning and noticed the polish of text B in contrast with the spontaneity of text A. Theories related to accommodation, face and footing. Many responses centred on lexical analysis so candidates limited their possibility of achieving top band scoring, despite the quality of discussion being good. Many candidates failed to consider the possibility of text B being written by a third party, or the function of the training session.

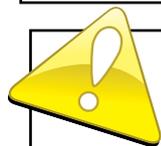
Top band responses utilised the use of the key constituents including pragmatics and grammar, relevant theories, and contextual factors in shaping their responses.

The 'mode' of Text A is spoken therefore there is use of figurative language and less structure throughout the duration of this text. Whereas, Text B is the mode of Text B is written therefore the text is more structured resulting in a more detailed context. Text A uses many non-verbal elements throughout such as paralinguistic terms 'uhm' this conveys to the receiver it is figurative language. ~~also the person's~~ There are many ^{causes} ~~features~~ (·) that convey to the receiver the thought and non-verbal communication used throughout. Whereas, in Text B the lexical choice used throughout is more structured and contains a flow of latinate lexis. This conveys the text to be more formal through their contextual factors and use of lexical choice. The text includes cultural



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Here the candidate attempts to identify the features of the mode. A valid comment linking figurative language and lack of structure to speech is discredited as the candidate cites pauses and paralinguistic features as figurative language. Despite a display of many knowledge-based terms and concepts, the inaccuracies and lack of development kept this script in the lower bands.



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The candidate might have linked the features of the mode to the presentation of self. Had an accurate example of figurative language been presented, together with a comment on how the speaker was presenting self, this candidate's mark may have increased.

Paper Summary

This report has tried to give an overview of how the candidates performed and to illustrate the observable strengths and weaknesses of the candidates' responses.

There were some very pleasing scripts produced this series.

Based on their performance on this paper, candidates are offered the following advice:

- Continue to underline the chosen feature for assessment for Question 1
- Continue to tackle Section A in a progressive way
- Analyse the contextual factors with examples of language features for Question 2
- Extend your analysis of the language features to grammatical, pragmatic and structural devices for Questions 3, 4 and 5
- Write simply and clearly about the presentation of self, using the contextual factors and key constituents as useful scaffold for discussion for Question 5.

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