

Moderators' Report/
Principal Moderator Feedback

Summer 2014

GCSE English Language (5EN3A)
Spoken Language

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General Overview

Two pieces of writing, both set by Edexcel, which are internally assessed and externally moderated (48 marks total available):

- **One Spoken Language Study:** (24 marks available) a commentary on two examples of spoken language which the candidates have chosen and studied in advance. Centres may use their own sources or those provided by Edexcel but must choose to respond to one of two topics set by Edexcel.
- The candidates have two hours to produce a piece of writing of up to 1000 words.

Candidates should exemplify and demonstrate their understanding of:

- The way spoken language works
- How language changes according to context
- The ways in which language use may influence other speakers and listeners.

One Writing for the Spoken Voice task: (16 marks available for A04 i and ii and 8 marks available for A04 iii technical accuracy). The candidates have two hours to produce a piece of writing of up to 1000 words. Candidates must respond to one out of three tasks which are set by Edexcel.

Candidates should:

- Express ideas that are relevant
- Have a clear sense of purpose and audience
- Select vocabulary for effect
- Organise their writing appropriately.
- Candidates should also use accurate spelling and punctuation and demonstrate a range of sentence structures.

Spoken Language Study Task

Candidates engaged well with the tasks set by Edexcel for May 2014 entry which were the same as those for November 2013:

EITHER:

Using two examples of spontaneous spoken language, comment on how the speakers adapt their language to different situations.

OR:

Using two examples of spontaneous spoken language, comment on how the language is used in two different regions.

Tasks were accessible for all levels of candidature. Many centres used the resources produced by Edexcel which allowed full exploration of the assessment criteria. Centres often provided their own well-chosen resources which also allowed students similar scope. Popular transcripts in May 2014 were interviews with Mo Farah, Paxman interviewing Dizzie Rascal, excerpts from Educating Essex and The Apprentice, I'm a Celebrity and cookery commentaries from Jamie Oliver and Nigella Lawson. Some centres used Youtube transcripts and a few transcribed and analysed their own examples of spoken language successfully. A few centres used- but had acknowledged- scripted resources which did not allow students to explore all of the assessment criteria; these included examples of presidential inauguration transcripts and lines from scripted television series. All centres completed the correct tasks for the May 2014 session.

Most students performed well against the assessment criteria; the first task option was the most popular. Many students understood how language changed according to context and explained clearly how language worked. Some students made comparison of the sources their focus rather than providing an analysis of how language was adapted in each source separately; in a few cases the centre had commented unnecessarily upon the quality of the comparative approach. There was still some reliance on

identifying or “spotting” features of spoken language, using a wide range of technical vocabulary, without analysing the uses and effects of the features.

Writing for the Spoken Voice

Candidates engaged well with the tasks set by Edexcel for May 2014 which were the same as those set for November 2013:

Write a script for a monologue/radio drama/TV soap (30 seconds-2minutes of spoken language)

OR

Write the text for a podcast (up to 1,000 words) for an audience of your choice on a topic that interests you.

OR

Write a short story (up to 1,000 words) in which character is developed through dialogue.

The range of Edexcel tasks allowed centres to select appropriately for their candidature. All tasks were responded to and students produced some very interesting writing. In the May 2014 session the Podcast option was the most popular and often most effective choice as candidates were able to research and write about their own interests and to adopt registers appropriate for their intended audiences. Narrative writing in which character was developed through dialogue was also a popular option this session.

The Spoken Language Study and Writing for the Spoken Voice tasks were accessible at all levels of candidature as demonstrated by the spread of marks moderated.

Most centres interpreted and applied the marking criteria accurately and consistently. The whole mark range 0-48 was used by centres and seen by moderators.

Spoken Language Study

A few centres tended to slightly over-reward at the top end of the range and on band boundaries, awarding students marks in band 5 for “perceptive understanding” where band 4 “thorough understanding” was exemplified and for band 4 which require ‘assured understanding’ , where students’

work demonstrated band 3 'clear understanding'. Conversely, at the lower end of the mark range a few slightly under-rewarded responses were evident.

Some students were hindered by listing technical vocabulary, describing or feature-spotting which prevented them from analysing the spoken language. While students need to show how language is used in different ways in two different situations or regions, they are not required to make comparisons in 5EN3A.

Most centres and students thoroughly understood the assessment criteria; it was possible to see that the students knew how to achieve within a particular mark band.

Although centres have no obligation to annotate scripts, those which did were able to make the moderation process so much more effective and to make the centre method of marking transparent, demonstrating that individual teachers are secure in their understanding of how to apply the assessment criteria.

Writing for the Spoken Voice

Centres were confident in assessing their students' Writing for the Spoken Voice. Generally candidates had engaged really well here with their chosen task and strong voice, sustained focus and awareness of audience and purpose were centre strengths.

Occasionally, moderators reported that students did not seem to be clear about the purpose and audience of their writing. Students did not always demonstrate an understanding of the conventions of their chosen genre. Moderators commented that candidates fared better in Writing for the Spoken Voice when given their own choice of topic and especially when able to write about their own interests, as in the podcast option.

Moderators noted some excellent examples of monologues, narrative writing featuring dialogue and podcasts which demonstrated a sophisticated understanding of the nature of spoken language; the best examples were where candidates had received clear instructions about audience and

purpose. It is helpful for moderation if candidates identify audience on their controlled assessment cover sheets.

Moderators also noted some examples of unsuccessful writing: academic essay style responses posing as monologues or podcasts which did not have a purpose or audience and might have drawn heavily from researched material.

The narrative option, where character is developed through dialogue, was popular in the May 2014 session and a range of spoken language devices were consciously and successfully used. Where a response comprises dialogue, moderators stressed the need for correct punctuation of speech.

Spoken Language Study Task

Centres and candidates continue to engage successfully with their choice of set task: many candidates are able to demonstrate a sophisticated understanding of the way language works in different situations or regions. Many centres are to be commended on their choice of lively resources, aimed at stimulating candidates' interest. Centres are reminded that the Spoken Language Study is the study of spontaneous speech and not the study of scripted words. There is no need to compare transcripts. Centre assessment of the Spoken Language Study has been generally within Edexcel agreed tolerance in the May 2014 session.

For GCSE English Language unit 5EN3A, 'The Spoken Language', you must use recordings and transcripts of spontaneous (rather than scripted) spoken language.

You're free to either use the resources provided by us on the 'Spoken Language Resources' CD or to source your own recordings and transcripts. Edexcel resources are valid for the life of the specification.

Teenagers: 01 Transcript Liverpool 15-year-olds radio show

If you do choose to use the Edexcel resources, please note that '01 Transcript Liverpool 15-year-olds radio show' in the Teenagers section is at least partially scripted. You can use it as an introductory teaching resource,

such as in this material, to highlight the differences between scripted and spontaneous spoken language.

Because it's scripted, it contains relatively few spoken language features, so we don't recommend that you use it as one of the two transcripts that your students analyse for their controlled assessment task. If your students have already completed their controlled assessments using this transcript, there's no need to contact us. We will accept work based on this transcript.

Writing for the Spoken Voice

Most students chose to write either a podcast about a topic of personal interest or a narrative in which character is developed through dialogue. Effective monologues were also submitted. Some of these responses were impressive and demonstrated sophisticated control of language. Rhetorical devices were used effectively. Centres are reminded that the focus of this task requires writing for the spoken voice. Generally centre assessment of writing for the Spoken Voice responses was within Edexcel agreed tolerance in the May 2014 session.

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