



Examiners' Report

June 2023

International Advanced Level English Language WEN02 01

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Introduction

The purpose of this report is to provide centres with an insight into the assessment process and give an overview of how candidates approached each question. In this series candidates performed well and the majority are demonstrating confidence with the criteria of the exam. The quality of responses has improved post-Covid with scores awarded across all levels including the top of level 5. There were some candidates who were unprepared for the standard of the examination evident by the lack of content within responses or applying a descriptive approach. It is recommended centres provide candidates with opportunities to familiarise themselves with the content and format of the examination paper, ensuring that they have a clear understanding of the requirements of each question before the exam.

Exemplar materials are available on the Edexcel website and give valuable insight into the marks awarded at each level and the standard required. Candidates should read through both questions, as well as the extracts in the source booklet, before beginning their written response. This will allow them to gain an understanding of the discussion points within the paper and note connections across the texts before they begin.

The paper is divided into two sections providing an opportunity for a comparative analysis in Section A and a discussion based essay in Section B. Candidates are invited to analyse three texts representative of the spoken and written modes of language. Each section contains one question worth 25 marks each. Candidates must answer both questions.

Section A: Spoken Language Today

This section provides an unseen piece of spoken language from the 21st century which is a variety of English. Question 1 engages candidates in an analysis of the development of this variety in relation to Standard English. In this series the spoken language was an example of Hawaiian Pidgin English.

Section B: Written Language of the 19th-21st Century

Candidates answer one discussion question on two written texts in the Source Booklet that look at the issue raised in Section A from a wider perspective. This series, the two extracts featured were an online article titled 'Why Hawaiian Pidgin English is Thriving Today' and an extract from an essay written in Hawaiian Pidgin English. Candidates were asked to discuss how Hawaiian Pidgin English Creole reflects the development of English across the world.

Question 1

Candidates approached this question well, demonstrated by a confident and consistent use of terminology to illustrate and explain their points. The majority of candidates are meeting the AO descriptors in terms of terminology and written expression fully utilising the opportunities to identify phonetic, lexical and grammatical features within Hawaiian Pidgin English. Most candidates made a reasonable attempt to engage fully with the task, and made use of the bullet points as a scaffold addressing the different language levels. This approach allowed candidates to structure their response and engage in a systematic analysis of the text and has been successful across all the series.

Candidates are achieving in the upper levels and there were some scripts which were awarded within level 5. Level 4 and 5 responses had covered a range features including grammatical, phonological and lexical features using sophisticated terminology such as non-rhoticity, clause structure and were supported by explanations of non-standard features linking to other varieties of English. Some students made reference to concepts and theories of language change discussing Kachru's circle, accommodation theory, prescriptivism, superstrate/substrate languages, prestige and Aitchison's crumbling castle theory. They provided lots of examples, making relevant and discriminating selection of source material and identified the language variation amongst the speakers linking to American influence and immigration. Discriminators in high performing candidates' responses are the range of features discussed as well as accomplished links to concepts and theories. Strong understanding was demonstrated of accent features making links to other accents which display similar phonetic variations as well as the common grammatical variations within creoles.

Level 3 candidates tended to lack the range of features in their analysis which is required for the higher bands and may have limited discussion on theories or discourse. In high level 2/low level 3 scripts analysis tends to be hampered when candidates simply identify the non-standard features and describe how they differ but fail to explore these differences in reference to contextual factors or the development of varieties of English. Weaker candidates tended to feature spot and describe what was there accompanied by a sentence written in Standard English to demonstrate how the non-standard feature was 'incorrect'. This is a common strategy with phonology and grammar. Some candidates would mention terminology such as word class or phonology and be able to link one or two features to Hawaiian or American culture. They highlighted general differences and attempted some exploration such as discussing the fluency of the speakers or commenting on the omission of plurals or non-standard verbs. Describing non-standard features as incorrect or broken English is still occurring in weaker responses as well as judgmental comments on a speaker's education level. This demonstrates misunderstanding of the variety.

Question 2

Candidates are referring to the source material consistently to construct a response focused on the variety of English featured within the sources. Connections were made across the data and the influence of colonisation and immigration was discussed with reference to the spread of English globally as well as attitudes towards non-standard varieties. The three texts demonstrated how language evolves and transitions over time with Text A and B detailing some history of Hawaiian Pidgin English and influences on the language's development as well as its impact on English. Text C demonstrates Hawaiian Pidgin used in writing and the negative attitudes towards non-standard varieties. Some candidates used examples from each text to demonstrate these transitions and the varying influences on language development which formed an effective response.

Candidates approached this question in different ways and the most successful candidates focused on all bullet points, referred to the source material, applied theories and built their answer around the development of Global English with reference to features present in Hawaiian Pidgin English. High level responses were detailed, used terminology and could explain the influence of a variety of languages on the lexis and syntax in Hawaiian Pidgin English. Discussion was expanded with reference to accommodation theory, code switching and covert/overt prestige regarding the use of non-standard forms. Strong candidates also showed an understanding of events which impacted the spread of English such as trade, colonisation and immigration and made reference to Kachru's circle and the Creole continuum.

Mid-level responses tended to address all three bullet points but may have focused on one which limited them and missed opportunities to explore the transition across the data. Some lower-level responses discussed the spread of English in general terms with little reference to Hawaii showing they had knowledge of the development of English but struggled to find relevant examples within the data to demonstrate this understanding effectively.

This is an extract from a candidate which scored in the top of level 4.

in the present Hawaiian. There is reference to code-switching in the text, as speaker one mentions, "I no use them everyday... but if somebody talks like this...", illicitly referencing to how Hawaiian Pidgin speakers may be reluctant to use the language unless it is with a fellow Hawaiian Pidgin speaker. This highlights that Hawaiian Pidgin is viewed in a prescriptivist's manner, leading to the stigmatisation of non-standard varieties of English. This is further expressed in Text C, where the writer says "Pidgin pessimists", drawing connections to Alcock's crumbling castle metaphor which states that the English language was once a perfect building that deteriorates over time. However, this is in contrast to the diversity of texts presented by the texts, like "mai tai", "hammajang", so it can be argued that it is impossible to preserve a language that is constantly changing, and how the introduction of new words from other languages contributes to the development of English. This is portrayed in the context of Text B, where it depicts the addition of the Hawaiian word "hammajang" into the Oxford English Dictionary, a



Here the candidate has been able to show connections across the data and demonstrated their knowledge of concepts and issues. They highlight the use of code switching in speakers showing how different contexts and who they are speaking to will influence their language. This is linked to prescriptivism and the stigmatisation of non-standard varieties. The candidate then argues that language is constantly changing and supports this with an example from Text B and the introduction of new words in the dictionary. They then move on to discuss loan words and how that has been a feature in the spread of English. The candidate selects interesting points from the data and uses them to structure their essay.



Identify points for discussion within the texts and use them to explain how English has developed globally.

Paper Summary

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

- Employ effective time management in the examination to ensure that appropriate time is spent on each question in relation to the assessment objectives.
- Read all three sets of data before attempting the question to gain an understanding of the discussion points across the paper.
- Continue to use terminology throughout your response in both questions.
- Ensure you refer to the sources in both questions and support your points with evidence from the texts.
- Include theory in your discussion in Q1.
- In Q2 consider all three texts in your discussion and how they demonstrate the transition of language.
- Make sure to refer to features which differ from Standard English as non-standard. Using phrases such as 'incorrect' or 'bad english' shows misunderstanding.

Grade boundaries

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<https://qualifications.pearson.com/en/support/support-topics/results-certification/grade-boundaries.html>

