

# ResultsPlus

Examiners' Report

June 2011

GCE English Language 6EN03 01

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## Introduction

This paper focused on language change over time with 3 texts concerning music in section A and written child language in section B. Although there are some signs of increasing parity between the sections, candidates still seem to lack some confidence with the texts in section A - especially the application of the key constituents. For both long answer questions (1 and 2b) candidates need to be reminded to keep their attention clearly focused on the data and not to simply recount theories or narrative accounts of the history of English without clear links to language examples.

Each individual question will be considered in this report and examples of candidate responses will also be given and commented upon.

Q1a. Candidates seem to be developing an understanding of this question and far fewer wrote on more than the required number of examples but there were still a number of instances where candidates tried to produce a wide ranging 'mini' analysis. Candidates seemed to be more aware of the more productive examples in the data and there were fewer instances of candidates selecting non productive key constituents. However, some did discuss lexical issues such as the presence of Latinate lexis. This was not strictly relevant as it is not an area of change.

Q1b. Candidates need to be reminded of the importance of covering a range of key constituents in their responses, as weaker answers tended to be characterised by limiting their coverage to one or two issues (normally lexis and graphology). In other cases, candidates listed (relevant) features but failed to explain why they were present in the data and so were 'feature spotting'. Although still present, far fewer candidates wrote at great length about the development of dictionaries etc and there seemed to be a growing understanding from many candidates about how such information could be briefly referenced to support their comments and analysis.

Q2a. This year the candidates were asked to explore emergent child writing. The open nature of the question caused candidates few difficulties and many displayed good levels of knowledge about this type of language.

Q2b. This required candidates to examine and explore written language at a reasonably advanced stage of development and to discuss the significant features the texts exemplified. Candidates were expected to think about how Emily used her written language to communicate with her audience and to discuss the key characteristics of her writing at this stage. Most candidates were careful to keep the focus on the data and to use the text to make reference to appropriate theories.

## **Question 1 (a)**

The form of this question followed the same pattern as the previous sittings of Unit 3 by asking candidates to focus in depth on two examples from text 1 and to explain and explore how and why they differed from Standard English. The 10 marks available reflect the length of response that is expected and many candidates scored well having written just over a single side.

Candidates seem to have benefited from centres growing familiarity with the specification and fewer candidates wrote on more than two examples or analysed the text in terms of mode, field, tenor and function.

In the lower bands, answers tended to be superficial or descriptive. Such candidates could often identify a relevant feature but had little or very general knowledge of it and there would be many errors in terminology. There was also evidence of some discussion of key constituents that were not relevant to the question with the most common of these being a discussion of the Latin loanwords in the text. Given that English still has Latin loanwords today this was not a difference and so such candidates scored well within Band 1 (candidates who discussed some of the Latin loanwords as archaisms were on much firmer ground). There were also some long narrative accounts and an assumption that Dr Johnson's dictionary was the sole catalyst for standardisation. Centres should advise candidates against such sweeping statements and make them more aware of the incremental nature of the process of standardisation.

Candidates in the higher bands selected examples that allowed for detailed exploration and allowed them to display clearly their knowledge of change over time. The most common features selected by such candidates were the interchangeable letters, the final (or silent/mute) e, the archaic verb ending 'eth' and the use of the long s. In all these cases there was clear evidence of centres having explored these features in great depth and there were some particularly detailed explanations of the long s from some centres. Band 2 candidates were aware of the many influences on the development of Standard English and they usually successfully described patterns of use for their selected feature and explained clearly and with confidence what replaced their chosen feature in Standard English. Band 2 candidates also exhibited an accurate use of terminology such as grapheme, consonant, vowel, inflection etc. to demonstrate their knowledge of the key constituents.

1 (a) Read Text 1 and answer the following question.

Select **two** examples which represent different key constituents of language.

Using these examples, identify and analyse the differences between the English of Text 1 and current Standard English.

(AO2 = 5, AO3 = 5)

Early

Text 1 is an <sup>an</sup> Modern English text written after the introduction of the printing press to England in 1476, and so as expected we can find

various orthographical features that are different to current Standard English. One is the use of the long "s", "ſ", at the beginning and in the middle of words, but not at the end.

This was a feature common at the time, although it is interesting that it is used consistently throughout the text, from "Musick" to "whatsoever", as although ~~the~~ Caxton's Printing Press had been in place for over a hundred years before text 1 was written

standardisation was not completely established.

This could explain, however, the reason as to why the long "s" is no longer used today in Standard English; it <sup>disappeared</sup> ~~disappeared~~ with standardisation.

A second feature present is the grammatical

feature of inflections. There are multiple examples of the "-eth" inflection in text 1, such as "allureth" and "delighteth", which seem to be inflections for the third person singular verb endings. It is possible that as standardisation evolved and as the cost for printing was so high the "-eth" inflection changed to "-s", possibly to save money when printing documents.



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This candidate has selected two productive features for discussion.

They begin with a discussion of the long 's'. The candidate understands that printing had an effect on the letters used and so shows an awareness of how external factors have affected the development of English Language. They identify the pattern of use in the text in terms of its use initially and medially but do miss that the long 's' is not used with a capital and do not mention that it did not indicate a phonological change. The loss of this feature is somewhat vaguely linked to standardisation but the candidate obviously has some understanding of this feature.

The second feature identified is the '-eth' inflection. They demonstrate an understanding of the term inflection and give clear examples from the text. The candidate further understands the use of this feature by describing its function and what replaced it in modern English. The reason for its loss is a little vague and not particularly plausible but the candidate has shown (again) that they are aware that printing affected the form of English. The candidate could have improved this section of their response if they had given some brief contextual information on changing inflections alongside the information already given.

AO2 - the candidate identifies relevant language issues in the data and shows understanding of these in the course of the analysis but the lack of clear development means they cannot reach the top of band 2. There is clear evidence that the candidate has linguistic knowledge and is applied accurately throughout the course of the analysis.

AO3 -. Although not totally complete or 'full', the candidate certainly has a very good awareness of the contextual factors surrounding the data and use of terminology such as 'inflection' shows that they are confident in the application of key constituents.

## **Question 1 (b)**

This year, the focus was music journalism from the 1800s and the modern day. The vast majority of candidates took the perfectly valid approach of analysing each in turn with comparison being integrated into the response with key words and phrases such as 'like/unlike text...'. Although there was obviously variation, many candidates were able to identify the different audiences for the texts, make comment on the purpose and identified the different levels of formality.

Responses in the lower bands showed uncertainty in the application of key constituents and tended to cover only basic issues such as the perceived formality of the lexis in text 2 and the informality in text 3 (noticing the use of formal lexis alongside the more colloquial instances in text 3 was the preserve of higher band candidates) as well as some basic comments on graphology where candidates discussed, often at great length, the number of lines in a paragraph. Many of these candidates felt the opera terms have now died away and didn't understand that they would still be used in this field today (with the probable exception of the titles) and they felt that the NME's lexis was accessible to all (probably because they understood it), when in fact it too required specialist knowledge. In some instances the key constituents were all but ignored and students gave narrative accounts in which they merely outlined what the texts were communicating. Scripts with these characteristics struggled to get above band two for AO3. Errors in terminology were also very common at this level and restricted the marks available in AO1.

Higher band answers covered issues such as lexis and graphology but also had a more extensive approach and were aware of the need to discuss the similarities the texts shared, as well as their differences. Such candidates were aware that music journalism is often affected by the culture of the day and is usually aimed at a knowledgeable audience (citing examples such as 'goths') and were able to make effective comments and comparisons on the language used. Candidates at this level used their knowledge of grammar to discuss and compare issues like sentence complexity, the use of passives and the use of adverbials for scene setting in text 3. It would seem that these candidates employed a flexible linguistic frame which they applied critically to the text, alongside a knowledge of contextual features. In higher bands, references to issues such as standardisation were kept to a minimum.

(b) Texts 2 and 3 are examples of music journalism.

Analyse and comment on what these texts show about changes in the language of music journalism.

In your answer, you should use your knowledge of how language and meaning are influenced by social and cultural contexts.

(AO1 = 10, AO2 = 15, AO3 = 15)

Texts 2 and 3 share similarities and differences that demonstrate areas of language change. It appears that this is partially a reflection of the context, text 2 is a newspaper and text 3 a magazine, which has a large impact on the register and thus the change is apparent. However, there are still journalism techniques for persuasion used in both texts as the purpose (to persuade, entertain and inform) has not changed over the years.

The lexis of text 2 is far more formal than the lexis of text 3. It contains ~~words~~<sup>lexemes</sup> of Latinate origin, for instance ~~words~~ 'repertory', 'compatriot' and 'continuance' and French borrowings such as 'cela va sans dire' which reflect the lasting influence of the French invasion in 1066 that loaned thousands of words to the English language. As the context is a newspaper, the Latinate lexemes and borrowings create a formal register and may be an indication of social prestige; the articles subject matter is an Opera which has high cultural capital attached to it. This also creates a ~~semantic~~ semantic field of music through subject specific lexis.



such as 'Opera', 'double-bass', 'virtuoso' and 'tenor'.  
A musical semantic field is also apparent in text 3,  
similarly through subject specific lexis, such as 'album',  
'punk', 'techno' and 'record'. Text 3 contains many  
colloquialisms: 'goths', 'chipper', 'hipster gadflies' and  
'paysmasters'. This reflects the music magazine context,  
creating a more personal tenor with the audience to  
build rapport and give an informal register. In text 2  
there are a very few colloquialisms ('won his spurs') which  
demonstrates the informalisation and conversationalisation  
of the language.



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This candidate includes an introduction to their analysis in which they begin to show an understanding of contextual factors and equally importantly they understand that because the purpose of the texts is roughly similar they will have language features in common as well as differences. In doing so they have shown a further understanding of the contextual factors that affect the data.

The first comments made by this candidate relate to the lexis and so they are starting to demonstrate knowledge of key constituents. The terminology used (lexis, lexeme and Latinate) is basic but appropriate and accurate and the examples are clearly related to the relevant notions of register and prestige. The comments on subject specific lexis are also interesting, although the candidate could have linked some of these to Italian and the need to expand the language for new concepts and ideas. The candidate continues with some effective comparison of both formality and semantic field to Text 3. Few candidates noted the use of formal lexis in Text 3 and most focused only on the informality. In addition, nor have they discussed how areas like music, which are heavily culturally influenced, constantly require new terms. The final comment about 'informalisation' has some relevance but this candidate, like many, does not explicitly point out that the informal language is a product of audience and topic and we would be less likely to find modern opera texts using such conversational language.

There is much premodification in both text 2 and 3. In

text 2 it is also used as a convention of journalism in order to help form the readers opinion prior to the headword, for example 'clever Italian' and 'pleasing voice'. In text 3, ~~pre~~ pre-modification is used to create a similar effect but is far more frequent: 'tatty Shoreditch pub', 'salted almonds', 'spray-on jeans', 'electronic textures' and 'crafty melodies'. The more frequent use demonstrates the change in register between the two texts but also shows that despite the difference of time, similar techniques are used to fulfil it's purpose. Text 2 uses the pronoun 'you' to create a direct mode of address to the audience. This builds rapport with the audience, but separates reader and writer giving the writer a more superior position. However in text 3 the pronoun 'we' is used frequently. This includes the reader and further persuades them to take on the writers opinion of the Opera. Possibly the most notable change between texts 2 and 3 is the use of elision. There is very little elision in text 2, yet frequent elision in text 3: 'they've', 'we'd', 'they're'. This gives a large contribution to the change in register and further illustrates the differences in context of a newspaper and magazine and it's links to social prestige.



The candidate clearly and accurately signposts the area for discussion using accurate linguistic terminology – pre-modification but does miss the opportunity to use the term ‘adjective’. They show an understanding of this type of writing by acknowledging that it is not a difference but something that one would expect in music journalism. Examples are used to illustrate the point. Some of the subtle differences in the use of the modification are missed but the candidate does show some clear understanding of the differences when they state that it is there to form opinion in Text 1. Unfortunately they neglect to discuss the more descriptive visual modifiers used in Text 3 for scene setting.

The discussion of pronouns falls under the key constituent of grammar and although the candidate misses an opportunity to use some simple terminology (1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> person) they clearly understand the different effects and give a plausible account of these. The final point in this extract is on elision. The candidate does not make quite as much of this as they could (a link to spoken language would have been the obvious choice) but they are aware it changes the formality.

AO1. The writing style is clear and fluent throughout and the organisation of the answer as a whole is coherent. A range of terminology is used accurately and appropriately.

AO2. Throughout the course of the answer, the candidate discusses a number of relevant language issues and the analysis shows a clear understanding of these and so the candidate places right at the top of band 4.

AO3. The candidate makes a number of quite detailed references throughout the answer to a number of contextual factors. Although not all are included in the above extracts, relevant comments from the key constituents of lexis, grammar, graphology, pragmatics and discourse were made throughout the response. This range, and the effective and careful exemplification, showed the candidate has a firm grasp of this information and allowed them to achieve the bottom of band 5.

The grammar used in text 5 is markedly different from that found in text 2. The piece begins with direct address to the audience ('if you thought', to engage them, this is 2<sup>nd</sup> person address). The text also features varied sentence length which makes the reader alert and doesn't

allow them to get distracted. This compares to text 2, which uses mostly long, compound sentences which fit with the context of that particular piece, following music. However, text 2 begins with an inclusive pronoun, whereas, text 3 begins with ~~the~~ 2<sup>nd</sup> person pronoun which separates the reader and the writer 'you'.

Colloquial, direct address is also used in text 3, 'think again.' This also keeps readers involved. The informal usage continues in the piece, for example the use of metaphors, 'misted into a different gear', this colloquialism creates imagery and fits with the informal aspect of the magazine and the genre.

Fronting adverbials are used at the beginning of the text to create a picture and a free story for the audience.

This method is continued into the second paragraph.

'released in early may.' Giving background information that to engage the reader. This is not seen in text 2, where end focus adverbials are ~~used~~ used, suggesting that the setting is irrelevant.



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The candidate correctly identifies that the pronoun address engages the reader (they do not identify the 'if...' element as a conditional adverbial as some band 5 candidates did) but this comment is slightly underdeveloped as they do not consider why this is important or why it is a characteristic of this type of writing. The candidate is then distracted by some comments on sentence type. This is certainly relevant to this data but the comments are sweeping and not supported by any specific examples from the data. The candidate notes that 'think again' involves and engages the reader but lacks the term imperative (and this could have been part of a wider comment on sentence mood) and again, at this point, does not consider why this may be important in this type of music journalism. The final comments on adverbials at the end of this extract show effective terminology and confirm that this candidate has ability to select relevant key constituents. In this instance the candidate does explain briefly why there is a difference.

## **Question 2 (a)**

The quality of the responses for this question clearly showed that centres had done some detailed work on this area. The wording of this question caused few problems and many candidates were able to give convincing responses, often discussing issues such as linearity, the list format and developing letter forms.

The vast majority of candidates were able to identify relevant features but Band 1 candidates tended not to get past making simple observations. Theories/theorists were unlikely to be referenced or related to the data and there was little attempt to explore how contextual factors may have influenced Sarah's development.

Higher band responses typically introduced detail. Popular theorists like Vygotsky, Skinner and Chomsky were referenced plausibly and terminology (such as grapheme and phoneme, as well as in some instances, the IPA) was used to give a more detailed exploration of relevant key constituents. Contextual factors such as environmental print, the purpose of the text and the importance Sarah put on the first letter of the word were all routinely considered at this level.

2 (a) Read Text 4 and answer the following question.

Identify and analyse **two** features which suggest that Sarah (3 years 9 months) is starting to develop written language skills and is becoming aware of important aspects of this form of communication.

(AO2 = 4, AO3 = 6)

Without any formal education there is already evidence in Sarah's emergent writing that she has understood the link between graphemes and phonemes. For example she has identified and clearly wrote the correct grapheme for /f/ ~~of~~, 'i' and 'z'. Sarah has also understood the grapheme for 's' however it is inverted. Although, graphemes 's', 'p' and 'd' are the hardest for children to write in a standard form. Sarah's understanding of graphemes may also have been influenced by environmental print, which is text's in the environment that influence children's language, in Sarah's case this would be the toy catalogue. Sarah has also started to

understand the concept of linearity and directionality. ~~Some~~ Sarah has also understood the graphology and function of lists. Here Sarah is writing for a purpose, and is using her 'best knowledge' as she has had no adult influence. The format of a list couldn't have been imitated from a toy catalogue, so supports the cognitive theory that children cannot use language until they have understood the concepts behind it. However in a way it can also support the Behaviourist theory if Sarah had imitated lists previously from e.g. her mother.





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### Examiner Comments

This candidate scored high band 2 for both AOs by showing a clear understanding of issues and concepts in the data and a secure knowledge of the contextual factors and key constituents. It is worth noting that an exploration of emergent writing will seldom lend itself to levels of detail one might expect with later forms of written language.

The candidate's initial comments put Sarah's development in some context – she has had no formal teaching and they also correctly identify the stage as 'emergent', and so imply a knowledge of the developmental process.

Effective terminology such as 'phoneme' and 'grapheme', demonstrates their assured knowledge of the key constituents although the answer could have developed this issue further – perhaps by discussing the fact that it is the initial letter that she gets right. The candidate finishes this first point by making a link to environmental print and so shows an understanding of the processes and influences at work as a child starts to develop written language.

The candidate's second point is a valid exploration of the graphology of the text. The discussion focuses on the list format and the candidate demonstrates an understanding of the external factors that may have influenced this. Two theories are referenced and it is a shame that Vygotsky was not mentioned when the candidate discusses the lack of adult influence.



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### Examiner Tip

Long descriptive accounts of theories are not usually necessary but always remember to briefly define and explain any theory that you use.

## **Question 2 (b)**

This question asked candidates to examine an eight year old child's written language and many candidates were able to make at least some observations about issues such as spelling and capitalisation. However, it was somewhat ironic that a sizable number of candidates at all levels of achievement commented on Emily's lack of consistency with capitals while themselves failing to use them for many proper nouns. The quality of a candidate's written work is assessed under AO1 and candidates would be advised to make sure such basic rules of formal written English are followed.

Low band responses were typified by a lack of depth and a more observational approach rather than seeking to describe and explain the features found in the text. Most candidates picked up on issues like spelling but lacked the technical ability to explain why Emily produced such forms and they seemed unaware of how literacy may be taught in schools. Many candidates in the mid to low bands did not seem to realise how advanced her spoken language would be at this stage and praised Emily for having developed plurals or past tense. More able candidates also discussed these issues but instead of relating these to spoken language development discussed them in terms of Emily meeting the needs of her audience and showing developing written narrative skills.

Higher band candidates tended to cover many of the same issues but had a wider range which covered more key constituents and more linguistic depth. As well as simply exploring Emily's development of written language they considered how she had developed the skills required to shape different types of text. Accurate IPA symbols were used to explore spelling and they considered how Emily's use of adjectives, adverbials and sentence types showed she understood her audience's needs.

(b) Read the data provided on pages 5–8 of the Source Booklet.

Using Texts 5 and 6 analyse and comment on the development of Emily's ability to communicate to an audience using written language.

(AO1 = 10, AO2 = 15, AO3 = 15)

Both text 5 & text 6 were produced by Emily at home. However one was with no help and ~~for~~ for her neighbour. The other was for her parents. Emily was aged 8 in both.

Through text 5, Emily uses descriptive adjectives to describe size 'massive' and colour 'brownie ~~off~~ orangey colour'. This shows that she is trying to give her audience a full picture, in order for them to imagine they were there. She also begins her story by using frontal adverbials 'It is in London. At the park', although inconsistencies occur, Emily has developed the knowledge of using written language such as time and place in order to communicate an effective story with her audience. Emily has also understood the concept of forming the past participle. For example, she uses 'I went'. This shows that she is trying to explain to her audience that the day has already happened, it is in the past.



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After a generic introduction, the candidate introduces some relevant terminology to discuss how Emily has developed a form of written language to meet the needs of her audience. In this short section the candidate is starting to meet the AOs through the clarity of expression, use of accurate terminology, reference to key constituents and an understanding of the function of Emily's writing. The comment on adverbials is good and contributes towards the candidate's score in AO3 as it is an aspect of grammar but the student does not fully develop the idea that Emily deliberately chose to place this at the start of her sentence. Although the candidate makes a minor terminology error in labelling 'went' as past participle rather than past, the comment is still interesting as the candidate relates it to the function of the text and Emily's ability to structure language correctly for purpose.

The graphological features of Emily's writing show that she understands the concept of a title, where the capitalisation is correct. She also understands the direction of text. Although the title may have been copied, development in her written communication skills are evident.

~~When~~ The orthography of Emily's text is inconsistent but follows a logical and followed a pattern, ~~when~~ spelling 'thru' shows us that Emily has used the phonetic /tʃ/ and again omitted the silent 'ough'. There are rare capitalisation inconsistencies throughout Emily



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In this section the candidate begins to discuss some aspects of Emily's graphology but the comments are a little vague. The concept of a title could have been related to environmental print or the influence of education and the candidate does not explore the lack of capital letters and any reasons for their lack of use (many high band answers related this to virtuous errors or Emily's concentrating more on the narrative than 'correctness'). The start of the orthography comment is promising. The candidate understands that there is consistency to the spelling but they don't fully explain that Emily is probably following the phonic method of 'sounding out' words. Only a single example is given and the IPA is not accurate. This section could have been improved with the examination of more than one example and a discussion of any examples where Emily shows independence from phonology such as the 'q' in her slightly phonetic 'sqwirl' which makes a 'k' sound (It is worth noting that the candidate does explore some of these issues in the exploration of text 6 when they have noted the use of the silent 'h' in whale). The candidate then returns to capital letters with a sweeping comment.

AO1. This candidate achieved a low band 3 as the written expression in this script is clear and fluent and the terminology is appropriate and accurate.

AO2. Across the course of the response the candidate shows an understanding of a range of relevant issues and showed a clear understanding of these. References to specific theories was rare and including these would have improved the mark for this AO from low band 4.

AO3. The candidate covers key constituents such as lexis, grammar, orthography/ phonology and graphology in the course of their analysis and shows accurate understanding of these. Some lack of development and some vagueness (for example the lack of IPA) mean that the candidate is only able to reach mid band 4.

In relation to orthography, Emily's spelling is developed and changes throughout the two texts. For example, she has correctly spelt difficult spellings such as 'orange' and 'tickled' ~~correctly~~, and on her own without guidance from a teacher, which is quite sophisticated for her age. Emily also experiments with her spelling in text 5, for example, she spells 'bridge' differently in the same sentence e.g. 'brieger' and 'bridge'. Emily also shows awareness of the phoneme / grapheme link in her spelling. For example, she spells 'thought' as 'thort', suggesting she has sounded out the word and heard the /ɔ:/ phoneme and represent it with the letters <or>. ~~instead~~ This is understandable ~~and logic~~ as the 'ought' inflection is difficult for children to use, and so is a logical attempt.

In text 6, Emily's spelling varies. One interesting point is the way she spells 'thin' like 'fin'. This shows Emily has chosen to represent the unvoiced 'th' /θ/ with ~~an~~ a /f/ instead. This may be because she ~~he~~ doesn't hear others around her clearly pronouncing the digraph <th>. Later in the text, Emily represents the <ph> digraph in 'elephant' with the letter <f> which is logical, and still understandable ~~and readable~~ and able to be read by her parents as her audience. Although Emily's spelling may appear 'incorrect' to some, what they actually show is that Emily has made phonetic guesses and shown awareness of the phoneme / grapheme link.



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This extract comes from a script where the candidate was awarded high band 3 for AO1 and low band 5 for AO2 and 3.

This section is concerned with Emily's spelling. The candidate identifies words that Emily can spell and shows an implicit understanding of the influence of education on her development, as well as offering a plausible reason for the various spellings of bridge. The discussion of the links between graphemes and phonemes is technical and accurate with appropriate use of the IPA. The slight error in labelling the 'ought' as an inflection does not significantly affect the quality of these comments. The concluding comments in this extract are thoughtful - the candidate implicitly understands the process Emily has undergone to arrive at her spellings, understands the possible influence of the environment and avoids negative comment by stating that the audience will still understand.

## Paper Summary

In order to improve performance candidates should:

- develop a flexible linguistic framework that can be applied to diversity texts and ensure they can use basic terminology without errors
- keep their focus firmly on the data and introduce issues such as standardisation or child language development theories only when they are relevant to the discussion of a specific example within the data
- avoid 'feature spotting' by always relating a language feature to a language issue or contextual factor
- remember that for child development questions it is often relevant to comment on what a child can do successfully as well as areas the child is still finding difficult
- make sure they read the question carefully and follow its demands - this is especially important in the short answer questions (1a and 2a) as these will have a specific focus
- use the IPA when discussing sound or phonetic spelling (for this examination this comment is really only relevant to the child development section)
- take care with their own written expression and avoid colloquialisms in their writing.

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