

Examiners' Report  
June 2018

GCE English Language 8EN0 02

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# Introduction

The purpose of this report is to provide centres with an overview of the performance for this paper.

This paper covered key aspects of the specification with a focus on children's language acquisition, assessing written language development in Q1 and spoken language development in Q2. The paper assesses four of the five Assessment Objectives; AO1, AO2, AO3 and AO5. The introduction of AO5 in the AS Child Language paper requires students to engage an audience and shape their linguistic response to meet the identified function and format, as noted in the question.

There are few limitations regarding the potential formats, functions and audiences for this question. Students should be afforded opportunities to practice shaping their language analyses to meet a wide range of formats, audiences, and functions to prepare themselves effectively for meeting the requirements of AO5 - "demonstrate expertise and creativity in the use of English to communicate in different ways".

A majority of students were able to manage their time effectively across the paper ensuring the answered both question fully. However, some students spent notably longer on Q1 and found themselves short of time on Q2 to produce an effective and accurate analysis. Q1 is marked out of 20 and Q2 is marked out of 30. The time spent and length of response for Q2 should be longer than Q1 as reflected in a higher number of marks available.

This was the third sitting of paper 2 of the AS English Language specification and it was clear that centres had responded to the guidance provided in the examiner's report and worked hard to prepare candidates for this examination.

Each individual question is considered in this report and examples from candidates' responses are also given for each question. However, a general summary may be beneficial to centres.

Question 1 required candidates to analyse the data in relation to Sam's literacy development at 5 years and 1 month old. They were asked to produce a blog for a non-specialist audience: trainee primary school teachers. The scaffolding under the question prompts candidates to use an appropriate writing style and register which will engage their audience. Candidates are also asked to focus on language frameworks and levels as appropriate in addition to introducing relevant theories and research. Responses are assessed under AO2 - "demonstrate critical understanding of concepts and issues relevant to language use" and AO5 - "demonstrated expertise and creativity in the use of English to communicate in different ways". While the focus of assessment is on AO2 and AO5, students are required to underpin their application of issues and concepts with close analysis of language features. Without such analysis, application of knowledge and understanding runs the risk of being applied indiscriminately, which will affect the number of marks that can therefore be awarded.

Question 2 asked candidates to analyse how Lewis' language had developed over a period of 1 year and 4 months. This question was assessed under AO1 - "Apply appropriate methods of language analysis, using associated terminology and coherent written expression"; AO2 - "demonstrate critical understanding of concepts and issues relevant to language use" and AO3 - "Analyse and evaluate how contextual factors and language features are associated with the construction of meaning".

Written development will always be assessed in Q1 and spoken language development in Q2. Some candidates who were placed in the lower levels struggled to track the child's development and the influences on it, which resulted in a deficit analysis of the child's language.

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## Question 1

This question presented candidates with a short narrative that was influenced by a story read in class. This was written by Sam who was 5 years and 1 month old and was produced in a school setting. Candidates were asked to shape their response into a blog aimed at trainee primary school teachers that explained the features of Sam's literacy.

This question was designed to assess candidates' knowledge of literacy development and move them away from the tendency to adopt a deficit approach. Responses adopted a range of styles with some candidates producing a blog with an introduction about general literacy which was then followed by an essay discussing literacy development in more detail. Most candidates were aware of their intended audience and wrote their analyses with this in mind. They adopted a range of devices to engage their readers.

The responses showed engagement with the data and those that were most successful adopted a more straightforward layout and were able to adopt a suitable register and style to engage their audience. Many candidates discussed Sam and what the data demonstrated about his literacy development. A few candidates were able to go beyond this to discuss what he struggled to do and how he overcame such difficulties. A significant focus on theories, particularly social interactionist theory, where they discussed the significance of the teacher's supporting comments.

Some candidates chose to write for an A Level teacher rather than a trainee primary school teacher, or wrote in a basic essay with little to no evidence of shaping the response in a creative way or adopted an overly colloquial register not entirely suitable for the target audience. These responses tended to show a broad and general understanding of issues and concepts relevant to written acquisition, often referring to theory as opposed to applying it i.e. 'this supports behaviourism' with little explanation as to how.

The lower level responses often revolved around linearity, directionality and spelling, often labelling such features as 'errors' or 'incorrect' rather than 'non-standard'. They tended to make observations about the non-standard forms and missed opportunities to explain why they were non-standard. Popular theorists at this level included Kroll, Barclay and Katherine Garvey; these were often applied in a deficit manner or inaccurately. The answers often mentioned Garvey's ideas around word class acquisition as a means of validating the theory as opposed to considering the age at which children would have acquired nouns etc. Candidates at this level struggled to differentiate between writing and speech and often discussed features in writing that the child would have mastered in speech prior to their written acquisition.

Higher level responses adopted a more formal and suitable tone to engage their audience and were able to craft their response to meet the blog format. The responses offered plausible and detailed analysis of Sam's literacy development outlining what he was able to do in addition to the difficulties faced. These discussions were underpinned by confident application of theory with language features from frameworks including orthography and syntax.

This extract was taken from a response placed at the top of level 4. It demonstrated consistency of analysis and adopted a confident format, illustrating an understanding of the audience.

1 Using Text A, write an educational blog for trainee primary school teachers explaining the features of Sam's early literacy.

In your answer you should:

- use an appropriate writing style
- write with accuracy and control
- write to engage your audience
- introduce relevant theories and research
- focus on language frameworks and levels as appropriate.

(20)

As teachers it is very important to understand where a child is in the development of their written language so that you may help them to progress. Identifying the stages can be done using an understanding of the characteristics of each.

This text was written by Sam aged five years and one month and it is an example of the construction stage. It is characterised by having haphazard spelling and punctuation as well as being phonetic. Sam spells the common noun 'car' as 'car' and the predicative adjective 'dark' as 'darc' demonstrating a dependence on phonetic spelling in order to spell less familiar words. However, these mistakes are by no means bad. It just means that those phonics lessons you have been teaching them are being taken into consideration and, as much as the repetition can become boring, it is very helpful to children learning to write, such as Sam. The substitution of 'k' for 'c' in 'darc' further indicates grapheme-phoneme awareness, (the understanding of the relationship between letters and sounds). So, while the spelling is not necessarily correct, it is ~~by no means~~ not entirely wrong. Sam is using what he has learned to help himself. These mistakes are known as virtuous errors.



The candidate has opened this response in an appropriate manner utilising devices to engage the audience. There is a more academic register adopted, whilst still incorporating some informal expressions, appropriate for an academic audience. The points made are exemplified and explained. The reference to theory is made relevant as it outlines how it is characteristic of the stage highlighted. It includes accurate terminology and presents their understanding in an engaging manner.

Level 4: 15 marks



The use of the phonemic reference sheet would have made the analysis of the child's spelling more discriminating. This is provided to aid candidates' accuracy of analysis.

This was typical of the responses awarded lower levels, particularly those placed in levels 1 and 2.

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(20)

~~This text~~ Text A is a written text by Sam aged 5 years and 1 month and it was produced at school, knowing that it is from a class means that he would have had some support and help but there is no evidence for this because Sam still makes quite ~~afew~~ a few virtuous errors and does not look like he has had any support at all except from the fact that his teacher has written the date and gave him a template of lines and circles to write on. First of all, we can see that Sam makes errors with his ascenders and descenders. I can see this from ~~that~~ the way that his lower case 'y's are above the line, we would expect to see the capital 'y's above the lines not the



Lower case, We also see that his lower case 'v' in cave has also reached up to the top line and again, we would not expect to see this unless it was a capital V, and a lower case should only go up ~~to~~ half way above the line.

Sam's lineation is quite good and he only goes off of the line a couple of times, also Sam is guided by lines so I feel that if Sam did not have the lines there to guide him, he would have not got his words to be so neat because it can be hard to write in a straight line.

In this text there is ~~omission~~ omission of unstressed vowels so I can guess that Sam is ~~with~~ spelling things phonetically meaning that he is in the phonetic spelling stage. Sam is saying a word in his head and writing it down how he is ~~think~~ phonetically sounding it. The examples of this are 'häv', 'fönd' and ~~cave~~ 'cäv', there is one vowel missing

from each of these meaning that  
the vowels are unstressed and not  
oftenly pronounced.



This response included some relevant features from appropriate frameworks. They identified features of literacy including linearity, letter formation and spelling. However, there is a distinct lack of exemplification and analysis. The response is observational and descriptive, and would have benefitted significantly from explanation. There is also a lack of shaping to demonstrate understanding of audience and format specified.

Level 1: 4 marks



It is important to integrate appropriate examples from the data to support points made. This demonstrates knowledge and understanding of language features and will aid explanations provided for the presence of those identified.

This response was placed at the top of level 3 and is characteristic of this level. It demonstrated clear knowledge and understanding, and shaped the response appropriately for the intended audience and format specified.

16th May 16<sup>th</sup> 2018

Hi everybody!

Welcome to the School Teaching Blog and our focus today will be on a piece of work produced by an ex-pupil of mine named Sam. Today, I will be discussing some of the features of Sam's early literacy so you know what to look out for in your pupils' literacy.

Text A (picture of)	This is Sam's work. He was 5 years and 1 month when he wrote this and produced it in school.
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According to Krill, Sam would be in the pre-orthographic stage at his age and Sam does

show signs of this being correct. Sam's orthography is very rudimentary and we can see that he has strived using his fine motor skills. However, despite Sam using his fine motor skills, he still produces his work in print. But his graphological techniques are great as uses directionality and as his teacher pointed out "finger spaces".

As you may have noticed, Sam's work was produced in school. This may explain his orthography as there are two ways to teach a child to spell - whole word or phonetic. Sam was most likely taught the phonetic approach which teaches the grapheme-phoneme relationship of the hand some phonemes match with graphemes and this causes children to produce, as a teacher called Gentry coined, phonetic spelling. This feature can be seen multiple times in Sam's work like for example "han" and even "car" which both ellided the <sup>m</sup> 'e' / <sup>l</sup> 'e' at the end as it is silent and thus Sam must not have realised it was there. Another example is <sup>m</sup> "car" "dare". The phoneme /k/ can be written as the grapheme 'c' or 'k'. Sam learned it as "c" so for <sup>m</sup> "car" he produced it as "cure" however Sam

then produced a orthographic error by over extending the rule so for /dark/ he produced the grapheme 'c' instead of 'k' - producing a phonetic spelling.

Sam seems to be aware ~~of~~ cognitively as the work he produced would be classed as a report by Rothery. Rothery was a linguist who proposed the idea that children will produce different forms of writing. He stated that report and narrative were the hardest - which is impressive for Sam. We know this is a report as Sam uses the pronoun "we" which demonstrates the text to be less egocentric. This disproves Piaget's idea however that children are egocentric.

~~Three~~ points

Sam's work also has teacher feedback on it with "well done sam!" ~~and~~ ~~and~~ ~~as~~ you could suggest this links to behaviourist ideas <sup>by Skinner</sup> that children learn through reinforcement and the teacher praised ~~some~~ Sam on using full stops which is impressive as in Kroll's 1<sup>st</sup> stage of preparation at 4, grammar such as full stops are deleted so seeing full stops at 6 is very impressive! However, ~~the~~ Sam's grammar is limited to

that so we would hope would produce more  
grammar like both commas or capital letters in  
the future. Sam's early literacy may have  
developed through reinforcement and ~~the~~ Skinner's  
behaviourist beliefs.

Thank you for reading today's blog. Next  
week we will be covering ~~the~~ a child's <sup>arms</sup>  
speech at age 4.

To find out more about any theorist mentioned  
click the links below.

www.link 1.com/rothney-and-hroll

www.link 2.com/Skinner

www.link 3.com/Piaget



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The candidate here has adopted a colloquial tone using an informal greeting and sign off. It utilises common features of the blog genre to engage the audience and present this as part of a series. The graphological features show that this candidate has considered the layout as well as content. While it is not necessary to replicate the intended format wholly accurately, it is helpful to demonstrate understanding of the genre conventions. This enables the response to be judged on its creativity as well as its language analysis.

Level 3: 12 marks



Having a good understanding of the audience and format allows for more confident shaping to meet AO5.

## **Question 2**

This question presented candidates with three short transcripts of interactions between Lewis and his parents over 1 year and four months. Students were asked to analyse how Lewis' speech developed during this time.

On the whole, this question was more successful than Q1 and students demonstrated thorough preparation for this response. They were able to apply their knowledge in a more confident and assured way to move higher up the language levels.

There was a tendency towards description and feature spotting in lower level responses, with some candidates struggling to track the child's development across the three transcripts. Some references to issues and concepts were made but they were often undeveloped and loosely applied, with few responses showing regurgitation of popular theories.

Contextual factors were significant in enabling students to understand how Lewis' spoken language had progressed but there was often a lack of reference to these in the lower levels. Child directed speech and behaviourism were most often discussed but lacked the depth of discussion and integration of appropriate exemplification to reach higher levels. There was an improvement in the analysis of phonology with many candidates trying to explain non-standard pronunciation. However, candidates at this level tended to assume that no further transcriptions of IPA meant the child's pronunciation was then standard. They failed to understand that this remained the same unless transcribed again.

Higher level responses did make good use of phonology and were able to discuss the child's development from babbling stages through to the telegraphic stage. When analysing the sentence structures, some candidates at the higher levels discussed the formation of utterances but went on to explain that the child's repetition of learned nursery rhymes might explain why they used a range of sentence moods. They recognised that the presence of such structures was not evidence of his progression in this area.



This response was placed in low level 4 and shows consistency in its analysis. There were some elements of the response that showed clear knowledge rather than consistent, and so was placed at the bottom of level 4.

**2 Analyse how Lewis' speech develops across Texts B to D through interactions with his parents.**

You should refer to the following language frameworks and levels as appropriate:

- phonology
- morphology
- lexis
- syntax
- discourse.

(30)

In text B and C Lewis appears to be in the holophrastic stage which is also known as the one word stage. This is shown through the fact he only uses single words when speaking and then uses actions to further express what he means. For example, when his mum uses the interrogative "Lewis where's daddy" which is also an example of child directed speech, linking with the child interactionist theory where the parent guides the child to further expand on what they are saying, he says "daddy" and then "points to the door." The child struggles to explain what he means through words so uses actions as an alternative. This is common in the holophrastic stage and for a child of his age as they are unable to say full sentences or even a few words at once.

Another thing that suggests Lewis is in the holophrastic stage is his use of reduplication when he says things like /mæmæ/. He says this in response to his mother's interrogative "Can you say mammy" which again relates with the child interactionist theory of guiding and encouraging the child to speak.

In the last text D Lewis shows that he has moved into the very ~~early~~ ~~stages~~ of the ~~telegraphic~~ ~~stage~~ end of the two word stage through his use of two word sentences such as "Natalie finger". The reason he is at the very end of this stage is because he is beginning to form larger phrases and almost sentences which is shown when he says "where are you" and "here I am". Lewis shows that he is able to use the first person pronoun "I" however because of the fact he was singing the lyrics of a song he clearly knows well he probably copied the first person pronoun and may not necessarily understand the real purpose and use for it. This would link in with the idea of the behaviourist theory as it is something he has just copied by maybe hearing the

song play or from interacting with his parents.

In text B Lewis's mother asks him to "shout daddy" to which he replies /daeni:/ using substitution of the alveolar nasal /n/ in place of the alveolar plosive /d/. His mother replies by correcting him which exemplifies the behaviourist approach as she is giving him the correct version of the word. Lewis does not then use the standard form of daddy however he does go on to say /dadad/ which is another example of his use of reduplication. Because he is only in the holophrastic stage he finds it easier to pronounce it in a reduplicated form. In text C there is also an example of the behaviourist approach being illustrated when the child says /rəra:/ where he is replacing the bilabial approximate /w/ with the vowel /ə/ showing his use of substitution. His mother then goes on to sing the song saying "row, row, row" correcting the child by saying it in its standard form. This encouraged the child to attempt the standard form which he

then achieved. His use of trial and error has links with the nativist theory as he has attempted different ways to find the standard form.

In text D, Lewis says the common concrete noun /figoel/ however there is deletion of the alveolar nasal /n/ which he seems to be unable to pronounce. This is shown again when he says /eti:/ as there is <sup>or /s/</sup> deletion of the alveolar nasal /n/ as well as other graphemes. One more example of this is when he says /menel/ there is deletion of the alveolar nasal /n/ at the end of the word. From this we can infer that this consonant is one he must struggle with which is why he almost always deletes it from the word. However after he non standardly says /eti:/ and /menel/ he then goes on to say them standardly which illustrates trial and error alluding to the nativist theory.

In text A when singing the song Lewis says "How you do" but misses out the verb "do", He does this twice which shows that he is still not cognitively developed

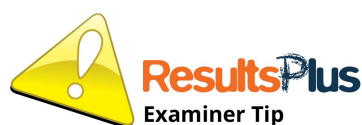
to be able to form a full structured sentence, linking back to him not yet reaching the telegraphic stage.

Negation is shown at the very end of text D when he says "no!"



This response adopts a sophisticated written expression and uses largely accurate terminology. Exemplification is consistent, demonstrating the candidate's understanding of language features. The candidate covers some relevant features including phonology, lexical choice and discourse. These features were often linked to stages of acquisition to enhance the analysis. There was some understanding of context, which was discussed through child directed speech. This was a prominent feature of the response. The candidate also comments on the child's repetition of syntactic structures attributing this to behaviourism rather than cognitive awareness of syntax. There were some pertinent points, however the range and level of detail in explanations limit higher marks.

Level 4: 19 marks



Analyse a wide range of relevant language frameworks. Select pertinent and discriminating examples to demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the data. This will improve the accuracy of the analysis and enable placement in higher levels. Clearly link language analysis to context, and use appropriate concepts and issues to underpin discussion around the data.

This response was awarded level 5. It demonstrated discrimination in the selection of language features and showed a level of understanding worthy of the highest band.

**2 Analyse how Lewis' speech develops across Texts B to D through interactions with his parents.**

You should refer to the following language frameworks and levels as appropriate:

- phonology
- morphology
- lexis
- syntax
- discourse.

(30)

In Text B Lewis is in the holophrastic stage, he understands labels and applies them standardly to 'daddy' and 'mama'. At this stage Lewis only puts together short syllables such as /da/ and /ma/ to create short words that he has heard

in high frequencies. Text C takes place 2 months later and at this stage Lewis is seemingly still in the holophrastic stage as he continues to create short words through joining familiar syllables, however, this time he attempts to put together 3 of these syllables rather than just 2 for example when he utters 'row row row' this is reminiscent of reduplicated babbling.

however Lewis is actively aware of the meaning of what he is saying or ~~is~~ trying to say showing that he has progressed past the stage of babbling into the holophrastic stage, as well as this the words Lewis creates or attempts to create, in the case of his attempt at the noun crocodile, are of lower frequency than those he hears in text B, this suggests he has widened his vocabulary beyond simple concrete nouns and is now able to apply verbs, such as the dynamic lexical verb 'row'. In text D Lewis is likely in the telegraphic stage, however this is difficult to know because the piece of text shows Lewis ~~is~~ repeating lyrics to a song, changing the name each time, this does not prove Lewis is able to create his own sentences however. It does show that he understands the elements that make up the sentence as he is aware that he is removing

part of the subject and he is aware that he is removing a name therefore needs to replace it with a name in the subject position.

Lewis shows difficulty pronouncing phonemes. In all three texts, in text B, his attempt to ~~produce~~ produce the noun 'daddy' produces the non-standard pronunciation /daeni/. This is quite common of very young children as the phonemes /d/ and /n/ have similar places of articulation and therefore /n/ is often substituted for /d/, especially when following a vowel sound as /aen/ is much easier to pronounce and a much more common pairing than /æd/. In text C, Lewis pronounces the lexical verb 'row' non-standardly as he utters /rɔ/. This is because the way ~~he~~ he knows how to pronounce the word 'row' is through the song <row row row your boat> in which the repetition of the lexical verb <row> causes



It to be pronounced quick resulting  
in the /əʊ/ syllable becoming  
an unstressed syllable when it was  
said and therefore when Lewis attempted  
to ~~recreate~~ the word it was  
omitted producing the non-standard  
forms in text D Lewis produces more  
~~non-standard pronunciations~~ this is evidence  
of behaviourism theory which states  
that children learn ~~for~~ through  
imitation and reinforcement and  
refutes ~~behaviourism~~ the nativism  
theory. In text D Lewis produces  
more non-standard pronunciations  
than in the other <sup>two</sup> ~~3~~ texts  
as he is now beginning to  
explore language and therefore  
making more mistakes along the way  
for example Lewis' pronunciation  
of the primary verb 'am' as  
/jæm/ is evidence of assimilation  
as Lewis ~~is aware of the~~  
attaches the post-vocalic /j/  
sound, from the phoneme /a/  
which is found in most accents  
in the UK, to the initial position

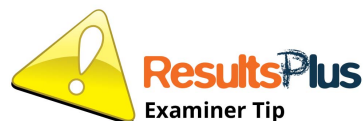
In the primary verb 'am' to create a non-standard pronunciation. Another way in which Lewis misapplies the phoneme /j/ to create a non-standard pronunciation is in his pronunciation of the pronoun 'I' as /jaɪ/ instead of /aɪ/ this is likely because Lewis knows the phoneme has a post-vocalic /j/ and has been confused and put it at the front of the sound instead.

Lewis' ~~ast~~ language is still not fully developed in text D as he omits the grammatically redundant lexical auxiliary verb 'do' this is a virtuous error as it shows that Lewis is aware of the grammatical redundancy of the lexeme within the sentence and as a result has removed it. This shows evidence for nativism theory.



The analysis in this response is confident and assured, demonstrating discrimination in the examples chosen to support language features selected. The candidate uses a sophisticated writing style and accurate terminology. They analyse and compare the three transcripts enabling them to discuss how the child's language has progressed over the time period. They integrate concepts and issues effectively. This enables them to analyse the ways in which the child's language develops and the influences on it. They evaluate the impact of context recognising the influence of child directed speech and repetition of syntactic structures. The response covers a range of pertinent language frameworks, using some of these features to challenge concepts and issues. Few candidates managed to do this successfully. The candidate could have elaborated this more to score higher in the level. This was a detailed response, effectively analysing relevant frameworks.

Level 5: 25 marks



Challenge concepts and issues using pertinent and effective examples to discriminate. Being more selective of the features analysed when linked clearly to context ensures the analysis is confident and assured.

## Paper Summary

Candidates are prepared well for the creative aspect of this paper and this was evident in the responses produced. This is the first instance where candidates have been asked to write for a non-specialist audience. This resulted in a range of styles, many of which were appropriate for the target readers. There were fewer examples of a deficit approach with many candidates adopting an appropriate style for their blog. This addressed the imbalance of AO2 and AO5 for Question 1.

However, there are some general areas of which candidates should be aware.

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

- Candidates need to understand the importance of covering language frameworks in Q1 (as well as Q2) to support and underpin their application of issues and concept relevant to language use.
- Candidates should make use of the English phonemic reference sheet provided in the source booklet to show discriminating knowledge and understanding of phonological variation to achieve higher levels in the mark scheme.
- It is often relevant for candidates to comment on what a child can do successfully as well as the areas the child finds difficult. In doing so, students should explain what the child does when faced with such areas of difficulty.
- Candidates are encouraged to explore theorists other than Kroll and Barclay when analysing written language development and avoid a deficit application.
- Candidates need to explore context to explain why the child may be using specific language features.
- Avoid 'feature spotting' by always relating language features to context and an issue or concept.
- Consider how to address non-specialist audiences.

## Grade Boundaries

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