

English Language

Advanced GCE **A2 7827**

Advanced Subsidiary GCE **AS 3827**

Report on the Units

June 2006

3827/7827/MS/R/06

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All Examiners are instructed that alternative correct answers and unexpected approaches in candidates' scripts must be given marks that fairly reflect the relevant knowledge and skills demonstrated.

The reports on the Examinations provide information on the performance of candidates which it is hoped will be useful to teachers in their preparation of candidates for future examinations. It is intended to be constructive and informative and to promote better understanding of the syllabus content, of the operation of the scheme of assessment and of the application of assessment criteria.

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Chief Examiner's Report

Candidates at AS level still need to be more aware of the importance of quality of written communication in their answers. At A2, candidates need to ensure that very careful attention is given to the specific demands of the rubric in all questions.

In both 2703 and 2705, candidates continue to produce a challenging range of work, often showing significant interest in a range of language forms and activities.

The individual Unit reports will give insight and guidance concerning the issues arising during this June session. Centres might like to consider particularly some of the issues raised in the reports concerning the mechanical accuracy and presentation of candidates' scripts.

2701 - Frameworks for the Description of English

There was a very positive response to this paper and candidates appeared to engage very well with the presenter and caller. There was a range of insightful comments on the nature of radio broadcasting, where there may be a mixture of scripted and unscripted talk, and on the different audiences that were at play here. Candidates responded positively to the regionality of the discourse; much good work has been done by schools to tackle assumptions about speakers with a regional accent or dialect. Some candidates were put off by the ages of the speakers and appeared to be surprised that older speakers may use slang or colloquialism - this suggests that they have not been listening to the varieties of speech in everyday life in enough detail! However, many candidates made interesting observations and suggestions about the way our language may develop as we age. Candidates made good use of the information provided in the question such as 'the presenter wishes to put the caller at ease' and this has enabled them to set off on the right path. There were some excellent comments on levels of formality, turn-taking and power, both in terms of gender and the role of the presenter.

In previous sessions there have been a fair number of candidates who were looking for transcriptions to fit into particular modes of speech, but it is becoming clear that centres are preparing their candidates with the skills to deal with any kind of transcription that they may be presented with; this is exactly the right approach. As was mentioned in the report on January 2006, candidates should be analysing all kinds of spoken exchanges in practice for sitting this paper, and it appears that by and large this is happening. There are many centres now with a helpful body of data and past papers that they are building up and using to prepare their candidates. The helpfulness of encouraging candidates to make their own recordings and transcriptions (for example of themselves, friends and relatives) is to be emphasised: this is invaluable 'hands on' experience of spoken language in all its variety.

Candidates are on the whole familiar with an impressive range of technical terms and are becoming proficient at exemplifying comments regularly in their responses. 'Shopping list' style essays, where candidates ran through a list of items they expected to find (whether or not they were there), were fortunately much less common and were generally only seen in the work of weaker candidates. There were still candidates of all abilities taking a line by line approach; this is definitely to be discouraged, as has been stressed in several previous Principal Examiner reports. The problem with it is that it can quickly turn into a descriptive running commentary and the same points can be made several times unnecessarily as the candidate dutifully logs each pause or repetition (for example) as it comes up, rather than dealing with pauses in one economical section. Common errors, mentioned previously in reports and still occurring, include not knowing the difference between accent and dialect, and using the terms Standard English and RP interchangeably.

In terms of AO3i, many centres are now obviously teaching their candidates to refer explicitly to syntax, semantics, phonology and lexis, and this is excellent practice. The term 'semantics' is still very underused, but this is not to say that students are not commenting on semantics – there were some excellent explorations of the words 'cracking' and 'love' and so on. Comments on syntax and clause structure are becoming much more common and confidently made. Many more candidates are making use of the IPA and are making really interesting observations about the role of phonological features in creating meaning. AO4 was addressed by comments on Grice and co-operative language which were sometimes helpful but often not really used to engage with the text - just repeated by rote. There was some excellent use of Giles's Accommodation theory and Coates' gender research. Please note that AO1 carries equally important weighting and so spelling, clarity of expression, formality and appropriateness of style, paragraphing and structuring of essays all carry credit and are of great importance to the candidates.

2702 - Variation in Usage of English

General Comments

There was evidence of improvement in candidates' work, especially in questions 1 and 3. Centres are to be congratulated for developing more linguistically enhanced responses, evident in a number of scripts. There are still issues arising which do have an adverse effect upon performance. It is vital that candidates read the rubric for question 1 with great care. Question 2 anticipates a more clearly designed input of technical analysis than that served by a limited comprehension approach. Examiners are still expressing some concern over the actual quality of written work, especially a casual register inappropriate to an academic essay. All these points have been raised in several previous reports.

Question 1

There were a number of interesting scripts which showed enterprise in both choice of material and the application of the dominant AO4 objective. This meant that the demand in the rubric to discuss lexis, syntax and grammar was well-observed. There were robust discussions and detailed illustration from texts, blogs, chat rooms, advertisements and press headlines/straplines. These responses showed that a careful reading and collection of printed data will give candidates a very secure chance to demonstrate considerable potential in the Written Language essay. There was much improved use of legal language, again supported by detailed exemplification and analysis. A few candidates even produced data from law reports published in the national press. Almost without exception all the above scripts attempted to show how the writing was variant from prescribed lexical/grammatical conventions. A number of recurrent issues indicated weaker performance. Candidates need to ensure they read and understand the rubric. A minority of scripts addressed only the stimulus material. A minority failed to show much concern with grammar and syntax, even though this is added to the question to ensure focus on the assessment objectives. This omission was clear in those scripts which gave lengthy tabulations of texts, without any supporting linguistic analysis. The attraction of sociological assertions about the class of readership for the press still lingers. This is clearly not an issue in this paper and does not fit under the two assessment objectives for which candidates receive marks.

Question 2

This question produced rather variable answers. Several potential problems emerged which tended to unsettle a number of candidates. It became clear to examiners that some candidates did not quite understand the purpose of a review and read the passages more as straight reportage. It was also clear that the range of cultural references / culturally specific lexis in both passages was often outside candidates' immediate grasp. The formality in passage (a) was, to some degree, predicated upon a distillation of the classical repertoire, whilst passage (b) was more involved with the iconic nature of performance. The features of discourse seemed to make this fairly clear and this was very much indicated in the differences in grammatical cohesion between the passages. The more focused responses tended to see this as a central issue in addressing the comparison/contrast needed. These answers were usually methodical and employed an apposite range of terminology which met the needs of the dominant AO5i. The less assured answers tried to turn the passage into a broad comprehension, with a number of accompanying mis-readings of the passages – for instance, passage (a) was about opera/a novel; passage (b) was about a Hollywood film on drugs and music. In some of these responses there was, like in responses to question 1, a lingering fascination with the possible social class of the readership of the passages.

Question 3

This proved a popular question and examiners praised a number of extremely accomplished responses. Candidates were able to unpick the transcription, showing how Andrew was a confident speaker, moving firmly into a quite mature speaking role and commanding a lively grammatical and lexical control over English. It was a pleasure to see how candidates could respond to the phonemic symbols, which raised the level of analysis about his pronunciation skills and, perhaps, stopped rather unproductive assertions about his social class. What was a further development, and to be praised, was the way that some candidates would apply theory about child language acquisition to particulars in the passage. In the past this has often been a rather poorly subscribed area, used as a substitute for analysing skills. This firm evidence of analytical methodology being systematically applied is very encouraging. There remain a few responses which use a deficit model in answering - asserting that a three-year-old cannot speak properly and does not understand grammar or conversational strategies.. This is not really addressing skills, and suggests that these candidates are not accustomed to the conventions of transcriptions, or have not had the necessary practice in analysing child speech at a micro level.

2703 - Experiments in Writing

In this, as in previous exam sessions, a diverse range of texts was produced, covering a wide variety of topics. The best candidates had clearly worked hard to produce texts which were well constructed and presented with a sense of pride. Teachers are to be congratulated as great care had clearly been taken in the preparation of candidates as well as in the administration and marking of the final submissions.

Magazine and newspaper articles were, once again, a popular choice, as were informative leaflets and advertising material. Moderators commented on the success of travel writing which, in its blend of literary and stylistic devices, seems to give rise to appropriate work.

There was a significant rise this year in the number of transcripts produced. An increasing number of candidates chose to produce transcripts of television shows, sitcoms and interviews and a range of broadcasts for radio. Other transcripts covered formal speeches, monologues and informal conversations between friends.

Most candidates were enthusiastic in their writing and had obviously enjoyed the autonomy of their work. Greater success was achieved where candidates had been given free choice to produce original work. It was noticeable that the results were less successful where whole groups had been encouraged to complete set tasks, working within set topics and genres.

For this unit AO2 is the assessment objective with the dominant weighting. Candidates need to *'demonstrate expertise and accuracy in writing for a variety of specific purposes and audiences, drawing on knowledge of linguistic features to explain and comment on choices made.'* The best submissions demonstrated a strong awareness of the linguistic requirements of different purposes and readerships.

The best commentaries were detailed and well focused on linguistic features. Candidates were able to discuss their chosen audience, purpose and context, demonstrating knowledge of stylistic and linguistic appropriateness.

Weaker commentaries made comments such as, 'I have used emotive language,' without any attempt to indicate the purpose and effect of such usage. In some cases the pieces of original writing were weak and did not provide sufficient scope for close detailed comment and linguistic analysis.

AO1 requires candidates to communicate knowledge, understanding and insight in a clear manner, using appropriate linguistic terminology. In the best cases the quality of written communication was excellent, with a high standard of accuracy in spelling and grammar.

In the majority of cases the centre administration was carefully and competently carried out. Centres are reminded that it is not necessary to include background material and early drafts of work. The final folder should contain only the two pieces of original writing and the accompanying commentary.

One or two centres were a little lax in their completion of coursework cover sheets. Please note that it is essential to complete all sections on these forms. Centres are also reminded of the need to adhere to word limits. Some candidates had been allowed to produce lengthy commentaries which placed their work over the limit of 2000 words and in some cases over 3000 words. Where candidates choose to ignore the word limit teachers are instructed to mark only the first 3000 words and to indicate on the cover sheet that this is the case.

The standard of marking for this unit was generally of a high standard. The vast majority of centres assessed the work very accurately but there were a number of cases where work at the top end of the range was too highly awarded. Most of the work was helpfully annotated, making useful reference to the assessment objectives.

2704 - Language Contexts, Structural and Social

General Comments

There was some variability in candidate achievement in this session. At the top end there were some really excellent, incisive scripts, showing a mature command of basic linguistic theory and demonstrating a sympathetic broader response to wider language issues. However, a number of candidates tended to write at an observational level, often drifting into language-tinged comprehension, rather than addressing the specific demands of the rubric. The issue of 'your own wider studies' is still being read as the chance to reiterate pre-packaged information, even if of doubtful value to the set question. It is important for all candidates to remember that the set passage needs close analytical investigation. The dominant assessment objectives are certainly largely met through the actual material on the question paper and this is a salutary reminder that, at A2, sharp critical focus is a pre-requisite for all responses to both sections A and B.

SECTION A

Question 1

This was slightly less popular than in some previous sessions. Almost all candidates who wrote upon it had some sound understanding of the IPA and the need to use it at a more advanced level of the study of speech. Some rewarding responses explored the use of the vowel quadrilateral, whilst others attempted to show that tone units/stress markers are of assistance in clarifying the rhythms of all speech. There were some interesting observations about the speaker's accent, with some secure supportive, analytical evidence produced concerning its likely origins. The fact that this was largely done by looking carefully at the orthographic methods of showing vowel variations and then analysing in a more detailed phonemic way showed that this subject is being well-taught and well-understood by candidates. There were very few responses which failed to address the main assessment objective balance in the question.

Question 2

Performance was sharply divided in this question. Those who followed the rubric worked systematically through the features which showed grammatical variance with the prescribed norms. This tabulation was largely successful in unpicking syntactic and specifically grammatical deviations. Those who were less secure with the very basic demands of the question became too concerned with the passage as speech, responding to it more as a social document about class and geography and moving away from the topic area. Whilst the grammar of speaking is an interesting domain, no candidates showed real evidence of studying either its morphology or how it is different from written syntax. AO3ii anticipates that all candidates will attempt a technical commentary, possibly working downwards from clausal analysis towards basic grammatical units/morphological issues. Deviations in spelling and punctuation are not generally issues in grammar.

Question 3

The passage showed clear evidence of semantic shifting and the importance of context(s) in terms of word meanings. This question invites the systematic approach, where AO3ii is covered by possible origins of word and how broader connotations are effected, depending upon chosen register. A number of candidates pointed out that meaning is a complex area of language and the metaphorical use of words often shifts them rather far from origins. It was pleasing to read the answers which looked carefully about the more precise, or diachronic, origins of the nouns/adjectives. Ambassador, Servant, Farce and Decimated were often chosen for some rigorous investigation. In these responses there was also a purposeful focus in linking to the given meanings in the context of football. Such responses, which begin to address issues of etymology and the importance of signifying practices, even if not entirely accurate, are certainly working structurally with language. A number of scripts rather too rapidly moved away from the details of the passage and entered into broader discussions of pragmatics. This was an example of the unloading of general knowledge, before delivering a detailed response to the examples. It

might be helpful to candidates to remind them that some basic lexicographical awareness should give a more coherent balance to answers.

SECTION B

Question 4

Despite the compulsory study of Shakespeare before A-Level and the fact that many candidates write about tabloid journalism in AS English Language, this was not a particularly popular choice. Answers were often more incisive about the dramatic language of the 17th Century than the (post-modernist?) irony in the tabloid pastiche. Candidates did pick up the fact that passage (b) was not serious and did follow a number of journalistic conventions – puns, character's age given, quotations from participants, straplines and a broad sense of facetiousness. There were interesting observations about dramatic language, with candidates mentioning that the lexis had similarities with modern English; but the syntactic patterning showed considerable deviation. The fact that dramatic verse was a spoken medium, or was originally intended as such, was compared to the practices of prose reportage in modern English. Candidates should be given credit for their focus on what was in the passages and for not engaging in lengthy general histories of the English language from Caxton onwards.

Question 5

The number of responses still moving away from the passage into broader feminist issues, often referring to sources whose contact with material in the passage is at best tenuous, is still a slight problem. The more focused responses worked systematically through the passages and linked specific lexemes to specific points about gender. This gave cogent coherence to AO5ii. The two identities of womanhood proved accessible and both tended to be treated objectively. There were some good and trenchant comments on how specific nouns gave a cultural identity to femininity and placed the person in a particular social niche. This was linked effectively to some of the conventions of magazine journalism/popular press and the construction of simple stereotypes. The fact that the discourse features could be seen as challenging a number of the dogmas of an earlier age of politicised feminism were picked up by some astute candidates. A further encouraging trend in these scripts was the care with which candidates did address syntactical and grammatical variations and analysed the specifics of the lexicality. This gave sound weighting to both AO4 and AO5ii. It is to be noted that far fewer scripts deviated into broadly sociological commentary about the possible social class of readership of selected passages.

Question 6

There were some very good answers to this question. The passage itself and the broader implications it raised attracted some excellent analysis and observations, giving strong directions to both assessment objectives 4 and 5ii. The examples in the passage set the tone and candidates shifted from general comments into the ideological issues of 'correctness' in speech. It was pointed out that speaking on a telephone is not face-to-face speaking. Furthermore, many young people are bi-accentual and can shift the registers easily. The rapper was largely dismissed as a passing cultural fad and not a significant element in any recognised speech community. The domain of the spoken, with its specific sociolects, was seen as fitting far less easily into prescriptive norms than that of the written. Several astute candidates raised issues of who exactly sets the standard for correct speech and proceeded to give some illuminating examples of the lack of such in public figures. There were also some pertinent enquiries about the meaning of 'command of your own language'. The general absence of assertions about RP and social class and the more linguistically thoughtful aspect of most responses is a really encouraging sign with which to conclude.

2705 - Language Research Topic

The investigations submitted for this unit were once again of a commendable standard. It was pleasing to see a diverse range of original and challenging projects which investigated interesting and relevant language issues.

The analysis of texts related to travel, sport and music was popular this year, with varying degrees of success. There were successful investigations of political speeches and also of writing for and by children. Some interesting work was completed in the area of gender, looking at gender issues in film, gender representations in the media and changes in the ways in which gender is linguistically constructed.

The assessment objectives with the dominant weighting for this unit are AO3ii and AO4. AO3ii states that candidates should *'apply and explore frameworks for the systematic study of language at different levels, commenting on the usefulness of the approaches taken.'* Many of the candidates had clearly identified a specific focus for their research and had adopted methodologies and linguistic frameworks which were appropriate for their purpose. Weaker investigations were vague in their intentions lacking a clear sense of direction and having a tendency to be discursive rather than analytical.

The analytical framework chosen is a crucial factor in the success of an investigation. Moderators commented this year that some projects tended to draw more heavily upon literary rather than linguistic discussion which, whilst not being unhelpful, seems a little narrow in terms of the possibilities open to candidates. Other candidates had adopted linguistic frameworks, looking at lexis, syntax and semantics for example, but had placed too much emphasis on providing detailed lists of features without any attempt to relate them to the audience and purpose of the texts or the specific aims of the investigation.

AO4 requires candidates to *'understand, discuss and explore concepts and issues relating to language in use.'* All candidates brought to their study a range of linguistic knowledge and the better candidates applied this knowledge to good and relevant purpose.

The very best investigations contained analysis which was well directed throughout having a clear hypothesis, identifying relevant linguistic issues and applying theoretical knowledge critically and concisely to arrive at real conclusions which were related back to the original hypotheses.

The presentation of work was generally good. One or two candidates still failed to submit copies of their primary data. It is, of course, essential that moderators have access to the material on which an investigation is based.

The presentation of transcripts, in spoken language investigations, was still causing some Candidates problems. Candidates should be directed to Appendix C of the Approved Specification, where there is a list of approved transcription conventions. In particular, attention should be drawn to the guidance on the use of capital letters and punctuation marks.

Centres were generally accurate in their marking. Many teachers now have long term experience of marking coursework and are able to apply the marking criteria accurately and consistently. Work was usually helpfully annotated, making direct reference to the assessment objectives in the summative comments. This is most helpful to moderators.

2706 - Exploring, Analysing and Evaluating English (Written Examination)

Comments on Individual Questions

Question 1

(a) and (b)

The transposition task was to write the script of a television news item based on material in a transcribed radio interview about the discovery of ancient documents relating to marriage customs.

Candidates generally coped with the material in terms of understanding. Most also chose an appropriate news-reader style and “voice” for the task, with the better answers showing an awareness of the need for some contextualisation and an understanding that a certain level of informality and colloquialism might be suitable. Many candidates were adamant in their commentaries (1b) that television news must be formal and serious; fortunately, most of them instinctively wrote in a less formal manner than they claimed to be doing, and some were quite fluent in selecting passive constructions (“a cache of documents has been discovered”) with a touch of hyperbole (“an amazing find”). More proficient candidates picked up the hints in the transcription that the subject provided scope for a light-hearted approach, with a contemporary slant on the fashion, especially in America and amongst ‘celebrities’, for “pre-nups”.

Some responses began in an obviously ‘news-y’ style, maintaining the illusion that this was one of a series of varied items and referring briefly to other news to provide a realistic context. Other answers stuck very closely to the material, limiting themselves more or less to summary and paraphrase. Direct address to the viewer was employed with some success. A few responses made significant use of an actual script, providing the reader with cues, prompts and pauses, but most simply wrote in continuous prose.

Weaker answers resembled simple summaries, more or less accurate, of the material in the transcription, sometimes exhibiting poor control of (sequence of) tenses and inconsistent or inappropriate lexical choices. Their commentaries tended to focus on how hard they found the task because of the typical features of spoken language (especially the lack of punctuation) in the transcription. Each year’s Report reminds Centres that this sort of comment is unhelpful: the focus should be on discussion of linguistic features relevant to a comparison of spoken English with the written form. Encouragingly, this weakness was less of an issue than it had been in the previous two years.

Some very skilful transpositions were followed by disappointingly thin commentaries which missed the opportunity to explain and explore what had seemed rather subtle language choices. It may be that some candidates are writing well almost by instinct rather than with a secure sense of how their choices of grammar and syntax create effects and a distinctive style. Centres and candidates need to practise the (AO2) skill of identifying then exploring, evaluating and analysing significant language choices in their own writing.

In previous sessions, many candidates had tended to focus excessively on issues of content rather than of language, much to the detriment of their (1b) answers. Again encouragingly, this tendency was much less marked this year. The simplest answers briefly described the structure and content of the transpositions, noted the ‘typical’ features of speech in the transcription, then went on to make some general points about the presentation of speech in written form. More developed answers commented on how they had used specific linguistic features – for example, representing some of the views of Professor R. in reported speech or shifting verb tenses – in their transpositions, contrasting their effect with the features of the transcription.

Candidates still spend a great deal of time rehearsing what amounts to speculation about purpose and audience in answering Question 1. Clearly these are important considerations, but

generalised assertions about who is likely to be listening to a radio programme (“the elderly, or the unemployed with time on their hands”) are not particularly helpful. The generally-expressed view of television news was that it is *serious*, invariably *very formal* and principally *informative*. It is surprising, perhaps alarming, that students of A2 English Language have not the critical acumen to perceive that most television “news” tends to the speculative and the entertaining rather than the purely informative.

Question 2

This section of the paper tests candidates’ knowledge of linguistic frameworks and their ability to apply them (AO3) to four different passages linked, this year, by the theme of marriage. The AO5 dimension entails exploration of language variation according to time and context, which many candidates address (or believe they are addressing) in lengthy rehearsal of the information given in the Reading Booklet about each passage.

Purpose and audience are important concepts, but they need not take up a great deal of an answer. Candidates who do discuss purpose and audience at length often end up speculating unhelpfully about authorial intention and/or the precise composition of the likely audience. Assertions based on pre-conceived notions about levels of formality in particular forms and genres are often unhelpful too: for example, radio interviews (Passage A) and web pages (Passage D) sometimes are comparatively informal, but a blanket assertion of informality is likely to be undermined as soon as either passage is explored in any detail. It would, of course, be worse still not to explore the detail.

Many candidates adopted a systematic passage-by-passage approach. This worked well enough, though the better answers were usually those more skilful in using cross-reference. Lengthy answers which conscientiously treated each passage in turn under each of a series of frameworks (e.g. purpose/audience, lexis, grammar) tended to be repetitive and rather superficial. Again, the advice must be for candidates to deal with what is in the Reading Booklet according to its evident features, not to rehearse a list of learned features regardless of whether they apply to the passages.

Discussion of Passage A (the transcription) has often tended in previous sessions to repetition of comment already made in Question 1. Well-integrated cross-reference was particularly helpful in avoiding this. Candidates were aware that Professor R’s utterances included complex, formal lexis as well as more informal colloquialism and jokes. Accurate comment was complicated by uncertainty as to how far he was ‘quoting’ (or translating) from the documents. Some candidates found it hard to analyse the semantic, syntactic or grammatical features of the passage, often avoiding the issue by asserting that spoken language has “no grammar”.

Passage B has over several sessions become the expected ‘older’ passage, and was regularly identified as the most formal. In weaker answers, this was simply attributed to its age. More developed answers attempted, with mixed success, to analyse sentence structure. The opening two rhetorical questions were often identified as such; but many candidates then went on to assert that the next three sentences were also rhetorical questions, missing the shift to a list of three indirect questions expanding on “is the first enquiry”. Because the author was evidently female, misguided assumptions were made about her attitude (generally seen as critical of men – which is not quite the point – and critical of marrying for love) and her intended audience. However, the overall structure of rhetorical argument was well-observed, and candidates both noticed and tried to account for the archaic initial capitalisation of a number of words. The better answers acknowledged that most but not all of them were abstract nouns; weaker answers noted at least that they were important words in the development of the writer’s point of view.

The question of ‘archaic’ lexis, especially in Passage B, causes problems every year. Helpful comments went beyond the general observation that a certain word was no longer in use and deployed good knowledge of appropriate lexical and semantic frameworks to point out, for example, that “spouse” might be used currently in legal documents or formal marriage ceremonies, and that “Covetous or Prodigal Temper” had religious and/or biblical echoes much

more likely to be understood in a less secular age. Daisy Ashford's use of incongruous lexis (especially "ejaculated") in Passage C also caused some confusion, but better answers showed an awareness that even in 1919 utterances like "I shall perforce dash my body to the brink of yon muddy river" would be received as curious (and archaic). Similarly, there was some good use of phonological frameworks to explain the mis-spellings as features of the young writer's likely pronunciation ("rather" seen as RP or upper-class) and also to account for Mary Astell's spellings of "convinc'd" and "consider'd".

In dealing with Passage C, the most obvious weakness was the tendency to criticise the writer's "lack of grammar" when what is actually defective is the punctuation. Candidates were, however, able to correct the deficiencies, and were much more comfortable and accurate in their discussion of the heavy use of pre-modifying adjectives and post-modifying adverbials.

Passage D was the least understood passage. Perhaps this was because it was not the obvious example of e-language which candidates might have expected from a web-site. American influence was observed in the spelling (but not the lexicality) of "notarized", and the opening rhetorical questions were generally seen as having not quite the same effect as those which began Passage B. Broad shifts in the discourse were observed: candidates could see that the comparatively informal collocations "death knell for romance ... financial cards on the table ... walk down the aisle" gave way to something more formal and expository in the final section under the sub-heading "History".

Overall, candidates were more likely to detect tone (and perhaps to characterise authorial intention) in these broad ways: awareness was certainly stronger than analysis.

**Advanced GCE English Language 3827 / 7827
June 2006 Assessment Series**

Unit Threshold Marks

Unit		Maximum Mark	a	b	c	d	e	u
2701	Raw	60	46	41	37	33	29	0
	UMS	90	72	63	54	45	36	0
2702	Raw	60	43	38	33	28	24	0
	UMS	120	96	84	72	60	48	0
2703	Raw	60	48	43	38	33	28	0
	UMS	90	72	63	54	45	36	0
2704	Raw	60	45	40	35	30	25	0
	UMS	90	72	63	54	45	36	0
2705	Raw	60	50	44	39	34	29	0
	UMS	90	72	63	54	45	36	0
2706	Raw	60	43	38	34	30	26	0
	UMS	120	96	84	72	60	48	0

Specification Aggregation Results

Overall threshold marks in UMS (i.e. after conversion of raw marks to uniform marks)

	Maximum Mark	A	B	C	D	E	U
3827	300	240	210	180	150	120	0
7827	600	480	420	360	300	240	0

The cumulative percentage of candidates awarded each grade was as follows:

	A	B	C	D	E	U	Total Number of Candidates
3827	14.97	34.24	60.03	83.28	94.75	100	644
7827	13.53	38.99	65.52	87.53	98.41	100	384

For a description of how UMS marks are calculated see;
www.ocr.org.uk/OCR/WebSite/docroot/understand/ums.jsp

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