



General Certificate of Education

**English Language and Literature
1721**

Specification A

**ELLA2 Analysing Speech and Its
Representation**

Report on the Examination

2009 examination - June series

This Report on the Examination uses the [new numbering system](#)

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General

Candidates are required to answer two questions. The first question requires an analytical comparison of unseen spoken texts. Candidates are asked to focus on two pieces of speech, one transcribed spontaneous speech, and the second prepared speech or other form of speech representation from a non-literary context.

The second section of the paper requires candidates to focus on the way speech is used and represented in an extract from the set text they have studied, as well as consider particular stylistic and thematic matters relevant to the particular text.

These questions test the ability of candidates to:

- use appropriate terminology to support their analysis
- compare different kinds of spoken texts
- analyse set texts with reference to the representation of speech as well as the exploration of stylistic and thematic issues
- write fluently and coherently.

Successful candidates:

- showed clear and detailed knowledge and understanding of speech features and their effects
- identified specific features, gave examples of them and explained the effects created
- offered an integrated comparison of the two speech texts
- showed detailed analysis of specific features of language and the effects created
- supported their ideas with examples and comment
- used the appropriate terminology to describe the features they identified
- wrote fluently and accurately
- answered the question.

Less successful candidates:

- offered general comments about speech without giving examples or analysing the effects created
- did not compare the texts in Section A
- did not sustain a clear focus on the question
- offered general comments rather than detailed analysis of the text passage
- ignored the set passages or paid them scant regard and wrote about other parts of the text of their own choosing
- did not focus closely enough on the question
- did not support or illustrate their comments
- did not use a language or terminology appropriate to literary and linguistic study
- showed basic technical inaccuracies in their writing.

Section A: Analysing Speech

Overall candidates responded positively to both texts, and generally grasped their contexts. Most recognised that speech was the original basis for Text B, and understood the differences between 'planned' and 'spontaneous' speech texts in terms of the features of speech used, the format, the overall purpose of each text and different levels of formality.

Successful candidates adopted an integrated method of comparison, combining analysis of features of speech with comments on context and attitudes. Analysis was secure in the identification of features, and distinctions were often made between the use of features in spontaneous transcript and a prepared text. Examples were clearly used in supporting references to features.

Less successful candidates failed to identify comparisons or merely touched on them briefly, or wrote broadly about the context or content of each text. Some candidates wrote separately about each text and overlooked comparison altogether. Other candidates failed to support analysis with examples or detail from each text, or were confused or inaccurate over the features they did identify – elision and ellipsis were commonly confused - and there were errors even in the identification of common word classes. Some focused inappropriately on the layout and general presentational features on the page of the texts.

There was a tendency shown by a number of candidates to focus more on Text A than on Text B, which resulted in an imbalance in both analysis and comparison.

Having identified a feature of speech some candidates offered only a general comment such as 'overlaps usually mean that someone is over-anxious to speak or wants to dominate the conversation' – without considering whether this applies in the particular case identified. Text B was sometimes dealt with by indicating what was not there (fillers, etc) rather than what was – which led them to the view that the text was very formal as compared to the informality of text A.

Sometimes candidates failed to comment on 'attitudes' altogether or simply stated them rather than analyzing them – 'Steph and Annie have a negative view of James Bond films' with no real discussion of vocabulary etc, or 'Daniel Craig wishes to promote his film' without pointing to any textual evidence or analysis.

Many candidates are still referring broadly to speech 'theories' (Grice or Lakoff were particular favourites) which may possibly be helpful in supporting comments on context or relationships, but often they are misunderstood or misused and add nothing to the response. Such analysis too often becomes detached from the detail of the texts, as do theories related to 'dominance' or 'status'.

Section B: Analysing the Representation of Speech

Question 02: *Great Expectations*

Successful candidates used the extract to analyse features of speech and wider stylistic points, commenting on the format of the dialogue, the use of exclamatives and interrogatives, and linking the conversation with Estella's earlier meeting with Pip, or her final meeting with him. Less successful candidates drifted into a descriptive or narrative mode, and failed to engage with the detail of the passage. Perceptive candidates picked up on the expression "I know of the pain she cost me afterwards" and were able to link this to a later episode in the novel.

Question 03: *Enduring Love*

Candidates generally responded well to this question and there was some good analysis of the vocabulary, sentence structure and the tone of Mrs Logan's speech and of her behaviour and physical presence. Less successful responses often presented largely descriptive character sketches and some spent some time on Joe's part in the scene, some of which was relevant, but tended to neglect the exploration of Mrs Logan's response and so offered a more limited discussion of the key focus of the question.

Question 04: *Eden Close*

Generally candidates clearly engaged effectively with the structure of this extract and the whole text, in particular the significance of Andrew being named "Andrew" in the narration and "Andy", as a flashback technique. The conversation between Andy's parents contained numerous features of speech, such as the use of imperatives and directive utterances by Andy's father and the interrogatives of Andy's mother, which were often noted and explored by candidates. As always less successful candidates tended to lapse into narrative and description rather than employing analysis to examine the effects created by Shreve's use of speech and other stylistic techniques.

Question 05: *The Lovely Bones*

This question produced a range of sensitive responses and candidates had obviously engaged thoroughly with the characters in the text. The best answers looked at the importance of Susie's narrative voice and then analysed carefully Jack's behaviour and contributions to the adjacency pairs, and the language used to describe Lindsey's feelings. Others were less focused and worked their way through the passage often making pertinent comments but ending up with half their answer on Len and not the family. Less successful candidates spent too long discussing Len's attitude rather than Susie's family, while better candidates were able to relate what he was saying to elsewhere in the novel and to Jack's reactions.

Question 06: *Waiting for Godot*

Few responses were seen on this text. Some candidates produced good responses analysing in detail the relationship between Vladimir's attitude towards Estragon as presented through the speech and other dramatic techniques. A few attempted an interpretation of the whole play and ignored the passage altogether.

Question 07: *The Caretaker*

Candidates generally responded positively to this text. Successful candidates thoroughly engaged with the interaction between Davies and Aston, especially the contrasts between the two of them such as Davies' exclamatory expression versus Aston's declarative expression. Often candidates were able to see the humour and the wider themes of the play in the episode and elsewhere, particularly the bed and the leaking roof episode. The stage directions were carefully considered in relation to audience responses: disgust/fear/shock at Davies' knife thrusting aggression; cynicism/amusement of the smoking jacket. The fact that the last lines of dialogue were punctuated with stage directions to slow the pace down and show his reluctance to leave, led to some sympathy for Davies. Less successful candidates had problems in being able to analyse the passage effectively and commentaries/description on what was happening featured, as did broad description of character traits, and contrasts between characters.

Question 08: *Equus*

Successful candidates responded well to ‘representations of speech’ and selected a range of features from the extract to comment on, including the way in which interrogatives were used; the use of adjacency pairs, as well as matters of tone. The extract also offered opportunities for those who wished to comment on ‘stage directions’ and the ways in which these enhanced the dramatic effects within the scene. Good overall knowledge of the text was apparent in many responses by the selection of other scenes for comment. Candidates clearly were able to engage with the text and there was evidence of thoughtful personal response. Less successful candidates found difficulty in focusing upon specific ‘speech representations’ and simply provided a broad commentary upon the character reactions in the scene with little or no analysis or use of terminology. This was particularly disappointing when candidates clearly knew the text very well, but were unable to direct their response to the wording of the question. Some missed the focus upon Dora Strang and wrote about Dysart’s relationship with other characters.

Question 09: *Hamlet*

This was a popular text, and successful candidates clearly knew the play very well and were able to analyse the passage in the wider context of the whole play, drawing upon a good understanding of the effects of dramatic irony and the cohesive value of foreshadowing. They showed a perceptive understanding of the methods used by Iago to gain influence over Othello. In depth analysis of features appeared in many responses, covering a wide range of lexical devices, phonological features and stylistic terminology – antithesis, hyponyms, semantic fields – even some adroit analysis of the use of caesura. Less successful candidates lapsed into narrative or descriptive accounts of what was happening in the passage, sometimes simply paraphrasing. Features that were identified were often left unsupported by detail or examples. One worrying aspect seen in a number of responses was the misinterpretation of what Othello was saying, placing the extract much further on in the play. Consequently these candidates believed that Othello’s “O Misery” was an expression of his abject jealousy, convinced of Desdemona’s affair with Cassio. The significance of the comment “I’ll see before I doubt” was therefore lost to them.

Mark Ranges and Award of Grades

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