Examiners' Report

June 2009

GCE English Language and Literature 6EL01

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Unit 1 (6EL01): Exploring Voices in Speech and Writing

This unit comprises the examined component of AS Language and Literature. With its explicit focus on aspects of **voice** it assesses understanding of how spoken voices are used and written voices are created in transcripts of authentic conversation and in literary, non-literary and multi-modal texts drawn from the 20th and 21st centuries.

SECTION A (Q1a and Q1b) involves the exploration of 3 unseen extracts. Candidates are required to identify features of spoken language and examine how writers and speakers shape and craft the extracts provided.

SECTION B assesses understanding of how the spoken word is represented in literary texts and is based upon the text they have studied. An extract from their studied text is presented as a starting point for analysis and they are then asked to make links to the broader novel/novella/collection.

SECTION A

Q1

This question required candidates to explore three unseen extracts provided in the source booklet - a transcript of authentic conversation (used in conjunction with question 1a), a written record of a chat show interview and an extract from a play (used in conjunction with Q1b)

Q1a(i) asked candidates to **identify** three spoken word features from extract A (a transcript of an authentic conversation between a mother and her teenage son) and then to **provide an example of each feature** from the extract.

Q1a(ii) asked candidates to comment on the function of **two** of their selected features **within the extract**

Q1a(i) was marked out of a maximum 6 marks at AO1 and although the majority did well, as in the January series, the question afforded a greater range of marks than we anticipated. Successful responses named features accurately and matched them to examples drawn from the extract. Some candidates failed to employ accurate terminology in the naming of features, others repeated the same feature and in this way restricted the potential for reward, a significant few did not match feature with exemplification from the extract. Some centres do need to address confusion with terminology – the most common being 'ellipsis' and 'elision' in relation to this particular question.

Q1a(ii) was marked out of a maximum mark of 4, again at AO1. Here those that linked the function of their identified feature directly to the extract were rewarded. A significant minority gave generic definitions of these features and lost relatively straightforward marks as a result.

Feature 1 .... filler

Example .... erm

Feature 2 .... ellipsis

Example .... what you doing

Feature 3 .... ellision

Example .... he's

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Examiner Comments

This script accurately identifies and exemplifies 3 features from Extract A. It was therefore awarded 6 marks for this component.

It lost marks on Q1a(ii) of the question:

fillers are used when the character is looking for something to say, often used in speech when on an uncertain toppic.

ellipsis is the ommission of a word from a text, often used to ~~signal~~ signify or a certain dialect.

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Examiner Comments

Here the definition is generic and the lack of specific links to the extract and the function of the feature limits potential to reward for this component to 2/4.

Had the response have extended to make these links as in the extract below, the mark awarded for Q1a(ii) could have been doubled.

Feature 1 ...... Filler

Example ...... 'Just me ond erm Luke'

Feature 2 ...... Stressed words

Example ...... indicate

Feature 3 ...... Elision

Example ...... c'mon

This response accurately identified and exemplified features in response to Q1a(i), scoring 6 marks for this component. It improves on the previous example in that it offers comments that directly link the function of the feature within the extract itself – the consideration of the use of stress/intonation moving away from the generic to the specific:

stressed word spoken by character M (mother) supports She is becoming impatient or frustrated frustrated with her son and is using emphasis to display this emotion.

Comments link the feature directly to the extract and demonstrate understanding of its function within the exchange itself.

Q1b

This second component of Q1 links to two unseen extracts provided in the Source Booklet. Text B is a written record of an extract from a TV chat show (an interview between presenters Richard and Judy and the author JK Rowling) and text C is an extract from a play script (***American Buffalo*** by David Mamet). The question asks candidates to examine how the writers:

•   Shape or craft the texts to meet the expectations of their respective audience/purpose/context

•   Employ aspects of spoken language in their texts.

Responses are assessed against AO2 with its specific focus on how structure, form and language shape meaning, and AO3 with its specific focus on the contextual factors which impact on the production and reception of texts. Each AO is marked out of 20, giving an overall maximum mark of 40 for this question.

The majority tackled the question quite well, with most finding the chat show extract more accessible than the play script. Concerns about potential confusion arising from the question, which, in relation to Text B referenced the 'writer', not the 'speakers and writers' proved largely unfounded (although we were on the alert post-standardisation). Most candidates explored the language and the dynamic of the participants with a degree of competence and engagement.

Overall, candidates responded well to the question in that it gave them the opportunity to discuss a range of linguistic and contextual features. Higher band answers presented an integrated discussion of both texts, demonstrating a confident command of terminology and a good appreciation of purpose and audience. The best answers to this question gave equal weight to both extracts. Many candidates approached the tasks

with skill and insight, with some notable higher band answers reflecting their knowledge and understanding of a variety of contextual (and generic) features within and between the two texts.

With some middle to upper band responses, there seemed to be a focus on the aspects of genre/context/audience in the texts, without much comment or discussion on the (spoken) language features. In other words, some candidates used the bullet points as an opportunity to divide their response between these areas, rather than combine their ideas and exploration using language as the basis. Of course these were rewarded as appropriate, but at times there was a sense of having to award marks for the implicit nature of this approach in this crucial area of understanding, rather than being able to see plainly the candidates' skill in dissecting the use of language.

In responding to Text B most demonstrated awareness of the conventions- linguistic and contextual - of a televised chat show and many considered the process of producing a written record of such a show. Many recognised that even though it might appear to be spontaneous the Richard and Judy contribution was, to a limited extent, scripted as the questions to be posed were planned. Most candidates picked up that there was an element in the extract designed to "tease" the audience and perhaps to persuade them to seek answers by buying the latest novel. Some more able candidates were also able to look at the relationship not only between interviewers and interviewee but also the relationship between Richard and Judy. Some rather broad statements were made about the nature of the audience for this extract including that it was for "elderly people and those who are unemployed". Others assumed that the audience solely comprised of teen Harry Potter fans and as such missed much of the subtext of the extract.

The more able candidates responded to Text C by recognising that the text was designed to be performed and that the author had included hints as to intonation and stress in the transcript. Weaker candidates took the text to be one to be read and only of interest to an American audience. The phrase " pig iron" appears to have confused many candidates who variously described it as "archaic" or "American colloquial language". Analysis of Text C was less secure in terms of the confidence – and competence- demonstrated in the investigation of dramatic perspective and the structures used to convey the voice and the dynamic of the participants and, as such, proved an effective discriminator. Lower band answers struggled with text C, confining their discussion to simple descriptions of the target audience which they gleaned from the contextual information provided, defining it as 'American' and confining it to the 1970s in which the play was first produced. They also tended to describe, rather than analyse, and showed a limited knowledge of key linguistic terms.

At **AO2**, successful responses explored a range of language features in **both** extracts. Exemplification was consistent and appropriate and the responses offered considered comment on the link between form and function. Terminology was fairly wide ranging and applied with accuracy. Less successful responses picked up on some general language features although coverage of the extracts was often uneven. In lower band answers exemplification was inconsistent and sometimes inaccurate. Levels of specific analysis and links between form and function were limited and/or undeveloped.

At **AO3** successful responses offered developed comment on the context of both extracts with consideration of the factors that influenced the production and reception of each. Investigation of the chat show considered the conventions associated with this form of communication and linked this Investigation of the prose extract to its dramatic function and structure and linked this to convention and audience. Less successful responses were unbalanced – most skirting the extract from the play, making generalised, undeveloped comments about context.

The following excerpts are drawn from a response that falls into the lower range of achievement.

At **AO2** it picks up on some general language features in both extracts, although exemplification is patchy and links between form and function limited. At **AO3** comments are very general and again undeveloped:

Text B is an interview on daytime TV. So therefore I would ~~imagine~~ imagine the audience for this would be middle aged people.

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Examiner Comments

Comments on audience are not fully developed and lack precision.

Text C shows an extract from "American Buffalo". This is shaped in a way which is almost like question and answer. Throughout this small extract there are eight questions.

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Examiner Comments

There is recognition of the structure of the dialogue, but once again this is generalised and undeveloped.
There is a general appreciation of the language and structure of the drama extract.

Don is obviously in control of the conversation and has more power. This shows in the extract, although mainly each person only says one line, there are three occasions where Don has a considerably longer turn.

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Examiner Comments

There is awareness of dynamic here – but analysis and evidence does not extend fully to the nature/form of the utterance but rather to a 'word count'.

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Examiner Comments

There is also lack of precision with terminology-

> Judy first speaks " No I don't - yes I do". This little bit has an elision with the word don't. However what I noticed was how Judy contradicts herself by disagreeing with what she says and then immediatly goes back to agreeing.

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Examiner Comments

The elision is accurately exemplified but there is no attempt to offer any comment as to its function. The self-correction is described rather than analysed.

The following excerpts are drawn from a response that falls into the mid-range of achievement. The script offers a relatively well balanced, if essentially straightforward, investigation of both extracts and as such shows significant improvement on the previous response in terms of AO achievement.

At AO3 there is increased awareness of the contextual factors that influence the content and structure of the chat show:

> Text B is a spontaneous conversation for a Television chat show, where the questions would have been planned. The interviewers are asking questions on a new book to try and gain information on the story, which their audience may be interested. The audience is likely probably to be younger, and will have read the Harry Potter books up until the new one, and their reason for watching it to gain information on the book.
>
> The interview expects the audience to have some idea of the characters in the book, with exophoric references, such as "I want Ron to marry Hermione", identifying the audience to be interested in the book.

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Examiner Comments

There is recognition of the conventions of the genre and audience is considered with a degree of competence. There is some exemplification but this is not fully consistent.

Spoken language features are accurately identified and exemplified across both extracts; the range, however is somewhat restricted:

> The conversation uses adjacency pairs, with R or I usually holding the floor, as they are interviewing / KR questions, for example "Two much loved ones?" "Well..."

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Examiner Comments

There is awareness of the features of spoken language employed in the extract, these link to structure and context but are rather obvious.

There are some insightful comments which link form to function or which relate directly to the context of the extracts and it is these that raise the overall level of achievement:

> Don uses the address "Bobby" to show his friendship to Bob, but this pragmatically infers that Don thinks himself above Bob, as the address is quite childish and almost patronising, highlighting that Bob is his assistant, and Don is in charge.

ResultsPlus
Examiner Comments

Here the comments extend to the dynamic that underpins relationship/dialogue.

The following excepts are drawn from a response that falls into the mid - upper range of achievement, and which offers a well balanced, accurate and discriminating investigation and analysis of **both** extracts.

> The purpose of the interview is to gain any information about the much anticipated final Harry potter novel. Judy uses interrogatives to try and find clues: "Two much loved ones?", whereas Richard uses ellipsis to try and create confidence between the participants: "Obviously you confide in him all things..."

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Examiner Comments

The structure and conventions of the interview are considered thoughtfully – and the techniques of the co-presenters are differentiated analytically.

The lack of non-fluency features suggest that the questions have been previously prepared. This is evident when Richard says; "All the papers that have been promoting this interview". This shows that research has been done into what questions the public desperately need answering.

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Examiner Comments

There is clear awareness of convention and evidence of crafting/planning is presented with competence

It is clear that Don has the higher status in this conversation as he is given longer units of speech. The rest of the conversation has a typical turn-taking structure and the informal setting prompts the participants to use colloquial dialect vocabulary such as "jewed" and "yup". Don's status is also evident as he initiates most of the topic shifts. Although the topics follow on logically from each other, Don sets the agenda by teaching Bob a lesson in Business; "Things are not allways as they seem to be".

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Examiner Comments

The dynamic of the dialogue is analysed rather than described. There is also a clear sense of the crafting of the playwright behind the dialogue (he is given...)

SECTION B

Q2-8

Candidates responding to "The Colour Purple" were able to identify the use of AAV but many failed to comment on how Walker adapts this as the novel progresses to reveal the Central character's progress and change of outlook.

Weaker candidates responding to "The Dubliners" were keen to argue that Dublin caused the central character to feel paralysed but were unable to show how Joyce suggested this. The choice of companion story however was generally apposite and candidates were able to draw some interesting parallels.

Overall the quality of candidate's writing and expression was good and a generally good standard of punctuation although perhaps being pedantic mention should be made of the need to put titles of works of literature in inverted commas and to use capital letters.

Overall the best candidates looked very closely at the language of the texts and related them to the works as a whole and gave possible interpretations of the word choices made.

Questions in this section cover the range of literary texts studied for the examination. Candidates were presented with an extract selected from their set text and were asked to explore aspects of voice it contained. They were then directed to comment beyond the extract to the wider novel, novella or collection (according to the text studied).

A successful response to the literary set text should offer detailed investigation of the given extract and extend beyond it into the broader novel/novella/collection. There should be relatively sustained focus on the central issues of the task (this varies, obviously, across questions and set texts) and selection of evidence should afford appropriate links to the extract and to the task. The best candidates here were able to focus on the "how" voices and effects were created rather than producing a "literature" essay.

At their best, responses were fluent, clear and technically accurate. Exploration of the extract was thorough and systematic and links to the broader text were well defined and appropriate. Exemplification was consistent and judiciously selected and examples were investigated using literary and linguistic approaches that were relevant to the task. Terminology was accurate and analysis extended to word, sentence and whole text level.

At **AO2** there was a degree of confidence in consideration of structure, form and language. Links between the extract and the wider text were well defined and exemplified accurately. Responses demonstrated confidence with the specifics of analysis and used this to explore links to how meaning is shaped by structure, form and language.

Less successful responses offered limited analysis of the given extract and were unlikely to extend **fully** beyond it into the broader novel/novella/collection. The choice of 'extension' material in some responses did not offer opportunity to move from the extract and make links across the broader text. This was particularly true of the short story collections where less successful responses seemed to simply attempt to work in a response to a story with which they were familiar without real focus on the task or the extract. A significant minority appeared to reproduce essays they had written which offered tenuous – if any – direct links to the task. Some candidates lacked consistent focus on the central issues of the task (this varied, obviously, across questions and set texts) and digressed into generalised comment on, for example, the perceived Feminism of Carter, the post-slavery context of Walker or the much investigated theme of paralysis in Joyce. Selection of evidence was inconsistent and at times supported general assertions rather than those that linked directly to the extract and to the task.

Exploration of the extract in these less successful responses was straightforward and comments on the wider text were generalised and/or descriptive. Exemplification tended to be inconsistent and not wholly appropriate. Investigation of examples was limited in terms of analysis and there was a tendency to describe. Terminology was offered in a very limited range and there was considerable incidence of error. There tended to be an imbalance of analysis at word, sentence and whole-text level with the majority focussing their analysis on lexical choice.

At **AO2** there was a lack of confidence in consideration of structure, form and language. Links between the extract and the wider text were weak and, at the lower bands of achievement, omitted. Less successful responses demonstrated insecurity with the specifics of analysis and links to how meaning is shaped by structure, form and language were limited.

The following excerpts are drawn from a response that falls into the lower range of achievement. It is a response to Q2, based on *The Bloody Chamber* (Carter).

This response is characterised by its inconsistency. There is a generalised sense of author and craft, some investigation of technique and some focus on the task. Exploration of the extract is limited but offers some focussed comment which is not fully developed and occasionally inaccurate. Extension to the second story is minimal.

> This extract is written in 3rd person narrative, which gives an omniscient view of what is happening, as you may trust the narrator to be not be bias.

There is a general awareness of Carter's use of narrative perspective but this is more of a recited definition than an exploration of its effects:

A general 'definition' is offered which does not fully relate to the way in which narrative perspective operates in the extract. There are also lapses in expression.

> Angela Carter uses language to develop the voice of the lion. She vividly describes him using adjectives, to create a picture of the lion. "Soft rumbling growl" makes the lion sound deep, she has used antithesis with soft and rumbling, to balance out the description, as soft and rumbling seem opposite however can fit well to create a noise you may expect.

At its most successful the response appreciates Carter's manipulation of language and makes a genuine attempt to focus on the creation of the voice of the lion:

There is an awareness of the use of and combination of adjective to convey the contradictions in the lion. The focus on voice is also worthy. The discussion of effect is, however, undeveloped.

The following excerpts are drawn from a response that falls into the **mid** range of achievement. It is a response to Q4, based on *The Color Purple* (Walker).

There is clear engagement with –and understanding of – key aspects of the novel. Expression is sound but often falls short of exemplification or specifics of analysis.

It is typical of many responses in that it identifies features AAVE accurately and offers comment on how this shapes the voice of Celie but does not develop this either with regards to Celie's voice in the extract, or to comment on how Walker adapts this as the novel progresses to reveal the central character's progress and change of outlook.

All make use of African American Vernacular English (AAVE) which is a style of writing which is closer to speech this is a specific sociolect which makes the letters closer to how the Celie would speak, features of AAVE include using present tense where past would normally be used 'He come home', using the infinitive rather than the 'correct' form of the verb 'to be', 'she be my age' and phonetic spellings such as 'Kilt' for killed and 'Youn' for yours.

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Examiner Comments

Examples are selected effectively to evidence features of AAVE, but links to their use by Walker to develop Celie's voice are straightforward. This section was obviously rewarded for use of terminology, but does not move far beyond that.

"The Novel uses Celie as an example of how someone acquiring a voice can help them break free of oppression, the letters became the building blocks for Celie's confidence and as they develop so does she, using more and more complex writing techniques which when mixed with her distinctive written idiolect create a unique voice.

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Examiner Comments

There is a sophistication of expression here that reflects an understanding of the subtleties of the text worthy of reward in the upper bands of achievement. However, eloquent as it is, it does not exemplify the points it makes and therefore cannot offer specific examination of language and technique.

The following excerpts are drawn from a response that falls into the mid-upper range of achievement. It is a response to Q3, based on *Paddy Clarke ha ha ha* (Doyle).

Doyle has Paddy's lexical vocabulary suddenly improve when retelling the story "He'd lived under the shadow of the guillotine itself." This shows Paddy is not only influenced by the context and register of the way adults speak but also the lexical choice as well.

Later in the novel, extract starting page 280, Paddy again uses repetition, and again is the word "Fuck off". However rather than being an attempt to conform like previously, But its him trying to become emotionless and prove to himself he can be hard like Charles heavy.
, a symbol of independence to Paddy,

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Examiner Comments

Comment and exemplification show commendable focus on the task. Terms are used accurately but could have been more extensive/developed.
The phrase is judiciously selected as it provides clear evidence of change and development across the novel as a whole. It sustains focus on the central issue of the task.

Appendix

Assessment Objectives

Q1a(i)

Mark	AO
0 – 6	1 mark for each identification (1x3) 1 mark for accurate exemplification of feature (1x3)

Q1b(ii)

Band	Mark	**AO1: Select and apply relevant concepts and approaches from integrated linguistic and literary study, using appropriate terminology and accurate, coherent written expression**
1	**0 – 2**	• Provides basic comment with inaccuracies or omissions • Gives generalised comment which may be limited to a generic definition of the function.
2	**3 – 4**	• Makes accurate comments which are full and insightful • Makes comment showing consideration of the function of the feature within the extract.

Q1b

Band	Mark	**AO2: Demonstrate detailed critical understanding in analysing the ways in which structure, form and language shape meanings in a range of spoken and written texts**
1	**0 – 4**	• Makes basic observational and descriptive comments • Makes comments on how structure, form and language shape meaning, comments are likely to be general and brief • Supports some comments with minimal exemplification • Makes reference to one of the two extracts only.

Band	Mark	
2	5 - 9	• Makes some observational and descriptive critical comments • Makes comments on structure, form and language, comments will be partially developed and links to how these shape meaning may be underdeveloped • Supports most comments with exemplification, but may lack consistency at the bottom of the band • Makes reference to both extracts with minimal coverage of one of the two extracts.
3	10 - 15	• Critically analyses in a mostly accurate way, identifies clear links between form and function, at the bottom of the band the critical analysis will be limited • Makes comments on structure, form and language, comments will be detailed, and will link consistently to show how these shape meaning • Supports all comments with relevant exemplification • Makes reference to both extracts, selecting appropriate material from both extracts.
4	16 - 20	• Critically analyses providing detailed and accurate comment, examining clear links between form and function • Makes comments on structure, form and language, that are full and insightful, and will examine some of the effects produced • Supports all comments with relevant and well-chosen exemplification • Makes reference to both extracts, selecting material from both extracts with insight and discrimination.

Band	Mark	AO3: Use integrated approaches to explore relationships between texts, analysing and evaluating the significance of contextual factors in their production and reception
1	0 – 4	• Makes some basic comments on context although this is likely to be uneven across the extracts • Identifies aspects but an extract may be omitted.
2	5 - 9	• Makes some developed comments on context. Responses include comments on the relationship between the language of the texts and the context in which they are produced and received • Examines both extracts: at the bottom of the band the detail across extracts may be uneven and there will be omissions; at the top of the band the detail across extracts will be extensive.

Band	Mark	
3	10 - 15	• Makes developed comments on context. Responses include well-developed links between the language of the texts and the context in which they are produced and received • Examines both extracts: at the bottom of the band detail across extracts will be consistent and thorough; at the top of the band there will be some evidence of sophistication.
4	16 - 20	• Makes fully developed comments on context. Responses include confident and insightful links between the language of the texts and the context in which they are produced and received • Examines both extracts: at the top of the band sophistication is more fully developed and there will be discrimination and insight.

Q2 – Q8

Band	Mark	AO1: Select and apply relevant concepts and approaches from integrated linguistic and literary study, using appropriate terminology and accurate, coherent written expression
1	0 - 4	• Responses will not extend beyond the extract. At the bottom of the band material selected from the extract is limited. At the top of the band materials selected from the extract will be appropriate • Identifies a limited number of linguistic and literary features, without employing appropriate terminology • Writes with minimal clarity and technical lapses.
2	5 - 10	• Responses may not fully extend beyond the extract, selection of additional evidence might not fully link to the task • Identifies some linguistic and literary features, with some use of accurate terminology • Writes with some clarity and with some technical lapses.
3	11 - 15	• Responses will extend beyond the extract and exploration is likely to link fully to the task. Selection of evidence will be largely appropriate with clearly developed links to the task. At the bottom of the band these links might lack clarity and precision • Identifies a range of linguistic and literary features, with some use of accurate and appropriate terminology • Writes with clarity and technical accuracy.

4	16 - 20	• Responses will extend beyond the extract and exploration will link confidently to the task. Selection of evidence will be sophisticated with consistently developed links to the task • Explores confidently a full range of literary and linguistic features, with sophisticated use of accurate and appropriate terminology • Displays sophisticated well-controlled written expression

Band	Mark	AO2: Demonstrate detailed critical understanding in analysing the ways in which structure, form and language shape meanings in a range of spoken and written texts
1	0-4	• Makes basic observational and descriptive comments • Makes basic comments on structure, form and language • Supports comments with minimal exemplification • Refers only to the extract
2	5-10	• Makes some observational and descriptive comments • Makes limited comment on structure, form and language. Links to how these shape meaning will be undeveloped • Supports some comments with exemplification, but at the bottom of the band this will be limited • Makes limited reference to material beyond the extract
3	11-15	• Analyses some of the material, at the bottom of the band analysis will be limited • Makes some comments on structure, form and language. Links to how these shape meaning will be partially developed • Supports comments with exemplification although this will lack consistency at the bottom of the band • Makes some reference beyond he extract
4	16-20	• Offers a reasonable range of analysis • Comments on structure, form and language will generally link to how these shape meaning • Supports most comments with mostly appropriate exemplification • Makes developed reference to material beyond the extract

5	21-25	• Analyses the material confidently
		• Analyses structure, form and language with clear links to how these shape meaning
		• Supports most comments with discriminating choice of exemplification
		• Makes detailed reference to material beyond the extract
6	26-30	• Analyses the material confidently and critically
		• Analyses structure form and language with fully developed and perceptive links to how these shape meaning
		• Supports comments with a discriminating choice
		• of exemplification
		• Makes perceptive and detailed reference to material beyond the extract

GCE2008 English Language & Literature 6EL01 Grade Boundaries

Paper No	Max Mark	A	B	C	D	E
01	100	70	62	54	47	40

Note: Grade boundaries may vary from year to year and from subject to subject, depending on the demands of the question paper