Examiners' Report
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GCE English Language and Literature 8EL0 01

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Introduction

This unit comprises the first of two examined components of AS Language and Literature and has an explicit focus on the concept of 'voice'. It assesses understanding of how spoken voices are formed and how written voices are created in non-literary and digital texts as well as how texts are formed for specific audiences, purposes and genres.

Section A required candidates to transform a screenplay extract from the anthology into an autobiography by its writer and Section B required a comparative analysis of one unseen television review and one from the anthology.

Each individual question is considered in this report and examples from candidates' responses are also given for each question. A general summary is below, which may be of benefit to centres.

In Question 1, it was clear that many candidates were very well prepared for the text transformation task. Where there was familiarity with the text from the anthology and an understanding of the autobiography genre, original texts written with creativity and confidence were produced. Responses placed at the higher levels tended to be those candidates who read the question carefully and kept focus on the task of exploring the challenges faced by the screenwriter.

At the lower levels, responses tended to just simplify the given text to produce a series of analytical paragraphs from the author's perspective. In some cases, lower level responses showed a lack of understanding of the autobiography genre and were written in diary form or third person. In other cases, candidates misread the question and wrote as the wrong persona.

In Question 2, the majority of candidates were familiar with the requirements of the task, demonstrating the care with which centres had prepared them. Very few candidates approached the two texts as separate entities and most had clearly practised a comparative approach, although the level of nuance and subtlety of the connections explored did vary greatly. Where candidates had a secure knowledge of a range of linguistic and literary devices and were able to apply this relevantly and selectively, responses were likely to meet the descriptors for the higher levels. At the lower levels, more formulaic or prescribed approaches to comparison that considered a few set features often prevented candidates from fully engaging with the texts, producing quite superficial commentaries. Similarly, candidates who attempted to answer the question of "how the writers used language to convey their opinions" often showed more perceptive awareness of the relationship between the writer and reader, along with a more subtle understanding of purpose. Lower level responses were more likely to contain generalised and often overlong discussions of the readership of certain newspapers or reductionist approaches to the purpose of a review to simply "inform" or "persuade".

Overall, candidates produced work which was often engaging and perceptive, showing how well centres had prepared them for the exam and the ability of the candidates to write creatively and analytically. Where centres should continue to focus this preparation is in ensuring careful, systematic reading of the question to ensure secure understanding of its requirements. In addition, for Question 2, developing confidence with unseen texts would also enable candidates to make more subtle and perceptive points about meaning, rather than relying on a prescribed approach.

Question 1

Question 1 presented candidates with an extract from the screenplay of "The King's Speech" and asked that it be transformed into an extract from the autobiography of its writer, David Seidler, where he reflects on the challenges of writing that particular scene.

It was expected that candidates would exhibit the following skills:

- Understand contextual factors and genre conventions.

- Consider how the text is received, with confident crafting of the text.

- Control their own writing style by employing a clear structure and avoiding lapses in clarity.

- Produce a text that engages by using carefully chosen language features.

Many candidates were innovative and imaginative in how they approached this task. Some included anecdotes, thoughtful consideration of the writer's problems writing the script and creative ideas regarding the source of Seidler's inspiration. Many of the responses were entertaining and funny, using humour effectively, whilst others took a more serious approach, exploring the social issues of the period or the challenges of living with a speech impediment. Some of the best responses also showed a perceptive understanding of the characters Lionel and Bertie and what a challenge it was to reveal their conflict in a script.

At the lower levels, candidates struggled more with maintaining the personal 'voice' throughout and lost the focus on the autobiography style. Some were keen to include some analysis of the linguistic features of the text and so the voice was inconsistent, others adopted a more confessional personal diary style, while others wrote in the third person in a more biographical or analytical style. In some cases, candidates missed the focus of the task entirely, choosing instead to write as either Lionel Logue or the King: at times this resulted in fairly creative writing, but achievement for AO5 was inevitably limited as candidates could not properly reflect on the challenges of writing the script as they had adopted an inappropriate persona. Similarly, achievement at AO3 was constrained by lack of understanding of the given context.

It was encouraging that very few responses included extensive "lifting" of the source material. However, there was a tendency at the lower levels to just simplify the text given and produce a series of analytical paragraphs from the author's voice rather than adapting the source material to create an original, transformed text. Some candidates wrote well but did not cover enough of the aspects of the question required, only addressing a minimum of the contextual factors. For example, they considered in some depth the issue of contrast of class, status and role but did not explore other contexts such as the staging or the prince's speech impediment.

Responses at the higher levels demonstrated understanding of the personal nature of an autobiography and candidates had adopted features accordingly, responding to the nature and content of the source text through the piece. The most successful responses clearly adopted the persona of a script writer reflecting back on the writing process and avoided straightforward analysis of their own writing. This task allowed students to move beyond the source material to create new and original texts. Higher level responses explored voice confidently, creating an assured voice for 'David' and including relevant conventions of autobiography, such as anecdotes, with ease.

It was impressive that so many candidates were able to adopt a convincing voice, adult style and register for a distinct individual so far removed from their own experiences as young people.

This response was awarded the top of level 5 for AO5 and the top of level 4 for AO3. It shows controlled and effective crafting of a convincing autobiography as well as subtle and nuanced understanding of context. The candidate keeps consistent focus on the task of reflecting on the challenges of writing the script and maintains an appropriate and engaging voice for David Seidler throughout.

1 Using information provided in Text A, write an ~~extract~~ from the ~~autobiograph~~y of ~~David Seidler~~ where he ~~reflects on the challenges~~ he faced when ~~scripting the first conversation between Bertie~~ (The King) and ~~Lionel Logue~~.

You may develop details contained in Text A but you must draw only on the information provided in the extract.

You should:

- develop your autobiographical writing for a public audience
- craft your style according to the given context
- write to engage and entertain your audience.

(20)

As an experienced playwright, having dabbled in both film and television writing, when accepting the post task to produce the script for the 'The king's speech', I hadn't comprehended the challenge of approaching such a topic.

I became aware of the this potential difficulty when I started to tackle the first conversation between Bertie - the king - and Lionel, his speech coach. Throughout this process it was imperative that the script maintain the sensitivity of the subject, with the king struggling with a speech impediment. Therefore it became vital that his position of higher status be maintained throughout the encounter whilst also reflecting the reality of the conversation as it happened all these years ago.

Upon researching the two characters, I discovered that the real-life Lionel originated from Australia, and, with that, had the harder nature of a stereotypical Australian. It became vital that I include his more informal manner to contrast the kings well-spoken dialect without over-stepping the boundaries, causing offence both in England and across the other side of the world.

With both characters being used to commanding authority within a situation it became difficult to ~~do so~~ reflect this as the constant conflict of personalities would've made for a tedious conversation, meaning I would've failed my duty as script writer. Making the decision to feature the contrast in tones added atmosphere to the piece, highlighting the fight for dominance between the two. However, to add variety I made the decision to finish with Lionel winning the top spot, something that, again, I had to approach with care so as not to offend the ever present Royal family.

Once this decision had been made, I could start to work with A stage directions to build upon the setting and interaction between the two. Again, this in itself presented problems with the need to make ~~or~~ each characters actions reflect reality and give

an insight into their personalities and approach to such a situation. By starting with silence between the two, I could command a slight "tension which was followed through with the strained dialect. ~~This~~ This helped contribute to the establishment of their stubborn personalities and constant competition ~~to~~ for ~~fight~~ alpha male.

What distinctly remains with me throughout the process ^was the difficulty of portraying someone with a speech impediment, lacking in confidence and making the transition into a king that could command the attention of thousands. Through this first scene I was able to highlight ~~For it~~ Bertie's starting point so that his final position was deemed as such an achievement.

~~To ~~kRilst~~ the~~ During the scripting of this first conversation I faced many late nights and ~~conversations~~ calls to the director over what was allowed or not. At the time, I - and especially my wife - became frustrated, why can't the king just listen to Lionel? But I guess that wouldn't have made for a very exciting film, and most definately wouldn't have made it an Oscar nominee.

This candidate's response was scored at level 3 for AO5 and level 2 for AO3. Although there is a clear attempt to create an original text, there is a tendency to describe and quote from the original text with more limited consideration of the screenwriter's decision-making process. Understanding of context is clear but lacking the nuance required to achieve a mark in the higher levels.

1 Using information provided in Text A, write an extract from the autobiography of David Seidler where he reflects on the challenges he faced when scripting the first conversation between Bertie (The King) and Lionel Logue.

You may develop details contained in Text A but you must draw only on the information provided in the extract.

You should:

- develop your autobiographical writing for a public audience
- craft your style according to the given context
- write to engage and entertain your audience.

(20)

When writing 'The King's Speech' I found it challenging to come up with an engaging conversation between Lionel and Bertie. I had created two very different characters prior to when it came to writing the script and I wanted to make them recognisable and entirely distinguishable to the audience. It was important to me to give both characters their own individual sense of voice which was honestly what challenged me most when writing the script.

I wanted to begin their conversation in humour as an awkward scene had been created. Lionel asks Bertie a question to kickstart the scene "know any jokes?" and Bertie replies "Timing isn't my strong suit." Then there is silence and an awkward stare at one another. I think this opening is iconic for the pairs relationship as it really symbolises

how different they are. It represents the distance between them as people.

When it came to developing the conversation from there, I thought we would have them try to decide what to call each other. I wanted to keep a comical element running through it so I tried to incorporate the child-like humour of Lionel and the very dry sense of humour of Bertie throughout. Bertie asks when his treatment will begin by addressing Lionel formally to which Lionel replies "... Please, call me Lionel." Bertie ignores this and says "I prefer Doctor." Lionel replies, "I prefer Lionel. What'll I call you?" Bertie responds, "Your Royal Highness, then Sir after that." Lionel then says "A bit formal for here. What about your name?" Bertie replies with his name questioning Lionel "Prince Albert Frederick Arthur George?" Lionel decides against this and asks "How about Bertie?"

This section of the conversation was really scripted in for entertainment. It was important to me to engage the audience and have them laughing. Much like any other writer, I believe we do what we do for the audience. Generating a response, reaction or emotion is what we care to do. The pair argue over names in adjacency

pairs creating a sort of tennis match between them. Bertie feels he is of greater power and authority and comes across as belittling Lionel and mildly arrogant in his manner. Whereas, Lionel really tries to bring Bertie down from his pedestal and create equality between them. This again, contributes to the hilarity of the scene as it could be said that Bertie is having none of it yet somehow Lionel is able to override that.

Lionel's character is portrayed as rude and offensive through the eyes of Bertie who cannot quite believe Lionel's confidence which Bertie may see as ignorance.

The contrast between the characters should be what intrigues the audience as they may find it relatable.

I think it was challenging to create such a diversity of characters especially through only their language and stage directions but without tooting my own horn I feel as though I have achieved an engaging piece of scriptwork which does all I had wished it to do.

The response starts with some promise; the candidate has adopted an appropriate register and tone for 'David' and the writing is clear and engaging. There is also a logical link back to the task with some consideration of the broad challenges faced by the writer when creating the characters.

As the autobiography develops, the accuracy and convincing voice are sustained with some skill at times: for example, the effective contrasting pair of 'I tried to incorporate the child-like humour of Lionel and the very dry sense of humour of Bertie throughout' or the description of their conversation as 'a tennis match'. However, the second paragraph does start to become rather more descriptive and the focus on the challenges facing the writer is lost. By the lengthy third paragraph, the candidate introduces a section of dialogue that lacks any real transformation from the source material. Furthermore, in this paragraph and the next the candidate offers little explanation as to why certain decisions were made within the writing process, other than very broad links to audience or context such as 'it was important to me to engage the audience and have them laughing'.

There is a slight slip in judgment of the audience for the autobiography in the choice of the linguistic term 'adjacency pair' in the fourth paragraph; this type of technical terminology was seen more extensively in some other responses.

Overall, this response does explore some aspects of how the writer created the characters of Bertie and Lionel and portrayed their relationship. At times the reasons for these choices are explained, but this type of reflection is not consistent throughout. There are some very effective sections of writing, however other parts of the response lack any genuine transformation or are less convincing in terms of voice. More careful planning may have resulted in a more consistent response with a closer focus on the task.

Plan your response for a few minutes before you start writing to ensure you keep your focus on the task and your transformation is original and engaging throughout.

Question 2

The "Comparing Voices" section required a comparative response focussing on how writers use language to convey their opinions. The candidates were required to explore connections between two television reviews; the first a review of *The Bridge*

from the FT magazine taken from the anthology, the second a previously unseen review of two more European dramas taken from the Mail Online. It was expected that the candidates would exhibit the following skills:

- Organise the structure of their response and write in an appropriate register and style.

- Apply appropriate concepts, methods and terminology.

- Support the exploration with a range of relevant examples.

- Display knowledge and understanding of how meanings are shaped in texts and of the writer's craft.

- Show knowledge of contextual factors and the ability to link this knowledge to how texts are produced and received.

- Explore connections across texts.

On the whole, this task was completed with confidence by candidates and they had clearly been prepared to adopt a comparative approach; centres appear to be developing the ways in which they teach students to explore two texts at once. Most responses considered a range of similarities within the two texts but candidates, on the whole, were reluctant to consider differences, so this is an area on which most centres can continue to work.

The majority of candidates were able to define the purposes of a review and comment on possible audiences for the texts, but often this was explored in an introduction and not revisited in any depth throughout the rest of the response. Responses in the lower levels had often adopted formulas for comparison, especially within lengthy introductions, producing generic responses that lacked application of specificity. The use of a formulaic list or a mnemonic for aspects of context or literary and linguistic methods were often indicators of candidates who were not prepared to fully engage with the question or the context of the unseen texts in great depth. Students could be better prepared by developing confidence with unseen texts generally rather than learning a prescribed approach that considers a few set features.

Responses in the higher levels showed more detailed reading and understanding of the texts resulting in a confident overview. Candidates selected features of both reviews showing a subtle awareness of the connections between the two texts in relation to their likely reader and an understanding of the nuanced purposes of a review. Where quotations were used effectively, they were not simply to aid a description of the narrative in both texts but as effective evidence of authorial decisions. A number of responses in the lower levels made very general comments about readership of newspapers or online texts with a focus on aspects such as social class or levels of intelligence which were often unhelpful and did not reflect the diverse way in which people can access news.

The range and relevance of concepts, methods and terminology explored were often a discriminator between the lower and higher levels. Similarly, higher level responses linked features to meaning and context, exploring the writer's choices and their effect in detail with relevant exemplification. "Feature spotting" occurred more frequently in lower level

responses, particularly where linguistic understanding was limited to the labelling of word classes with little further explanation of how these words created meaning.

The following response was scored at the top of level 4 for AO1-3 and at the bottom of level 5 for AO4. The candidate applies relevant methods and terminology with appropriate evidence and analysis of how meanings are shaped in both texts; the evaluation of the effect of context is not as subtle or nuanced. Comparisons between the two texts are effective and sustained throughout, with evidence of an integrated approach developing.

2 Compare how the writers of Text B and Text C use language to convey their opinions in their reviews.

You must consider:

- the use of linguistic and literary features
- the influence of audience and purpose
- the contexts of the texts.

(30)

Text B, an edited review on by Christopher Stevens, recently released subtitled TV drama's attempts to capture an enthusiastic, persuasive voice, informing and entertaining the audience whom maybe intrested in the foreign television dramas or simply want to find out more, either way the fact it is published online makes it more accessable and therefore broad broadens it audience. Likewise Martin Hoyle addresses his love for the Scandinavian noir TV Drama - the Bridge. His review, published in the financial Times magazine comments on his passion whilst persuading the audience through his heavily bias subjective narrative.

Both texts begin by establishing their contexts of foreign TV dramas, and although they are in the written mode, they adopt a more conversational, colloquial voice - which emphasises their enthusiasm. Text B instantly begins with 'Hooray for drama you can follow...' The colloquialism 'Hooray' address Stevens satisfaction, that finally a decent drama has arrived, however the use of ellipsis creates a pause suggesting the enthusiasm of the positive comment is about to recieve a negative, which clear in Stevens view the use of 'subtitles' is. Similarly, Hoyle begins "Saturday is complete again" this sense of optimism suggests something was missing without it, and like Stevens, is now satisfied. The noun 'Saturday' being traditionally and day of work free relaxation would excite altho a broad audience as they can relate to Hoyles enthusiasm. Furthermore, as it is complete 'again' it suggest that once before it has the series has 'completed' Hoyles nights subsiquently enforcing his enjoyment to a secondary

audience. He continues to talk on behalf of the nation with the collective pronoun 'we' suggesting unity and that we should come together to watch it. Steven's also comments on the 'nation' linking to the idea of togetherness and unity - producing a optimistic tone to both reviews.

As the texts progress, they use rhetorical language to persuade the audience to watch the dramas reflecting the writers excited voice. Steven's direct address stating that 'you wont want to miss this' new series called Trapped on BBC4 creates a personal response, increasing the probability of the audiences desire to watch it - which is ultimately Steven's aim. Hoyle's use of asyndetic listing of Saga's 'antiseptic, angular, pre-eminently logical psyche' creates a peculiar tone with the addition of robotic, lutinate adjectives to describe the protagonist. The strange lexis creates a curious and engaging review requiring the audience to watch 'The Bridge'. The tension is

also apparent in the dramatic short sentence of Stevens review 'They're all the trapped' the tense atmosphere created emphasises his persuasive voice and appricicative opinioned piece.

As the reviews come to an end, they continue with the passionate ~~habit~~ tone, but through the structure. This is seen in Steven's use of parenthisis to add in new exciting information, ~~the~~ it also fragments the text and therefore creates a sense that his enthusiasm created breathless excited voice and produces an imitation of the spoken mode eventhough it is written On the other hand, Hoyle adopts rich poetic lexis to emphasise his excitment the adjectives 'rich' 'vivid' and 'isolation' create a semantic field of ~~pass~~ both passion and suspense, ~~leading~~ making the audience more engaged in the text. The final sentence of both text is short and simple to make an impact on the reader, Stevens like 'All with subtitles comments ~~of~~ on the contextual details adding validity, whilst expressing how amazing

the shows are even though they ~~have~~ are foreign. Hoyles last line 'The dark is all-pervasive' is very sinister, and dramatic linking to the context of the crime series ~~and the creating as~~ whilst persuading audiences to watch it.

Overall, it is clear both texts are passionate about their chosen subject of review and have a cohesive structure due to the referral back to original points, and repetitive phrases. Both are very similar as the adopt as similar tone and clearly both have strong positive opinions, but Hoyles language could be seen to be more latinate and sophisticated reflected by the more formal mode of publication in the less accessable FT magazine.

The introduction provides a brief, broad summary of some key contextual factors; this is not inaccurate but may have been included more usefully as part of the analysis of features in the body of the response. The candidate is able to explore register, tone and voice in both texts with some confidence, exploring features such as colloquialisms and ellipsis as well as identifying word classes with accuracy. Perceptive links are made between the identified methods and the effects created, with some more limited comment on the reception by the audience. An integrated approach to exploring connections between the texts is seen, for example, in the comparison of Hoyle's use of the collective pronoun 'we' and Stevens's reference to 'the nation'.

The integrated comparison of rhetorical language employed by both writers is particularly insightful and the candidate continues to provide effective exemplification throughout this passage. The discussion of 'robotic, latinate adjectives to describe the protagonist' is perceptive, as is the comparison of methods used to create tension and convey emotion. As the response reaches analysis of the ending of both texts, the candidate continues to explore tone through well-chosen methods and examples, making consistent links between techniques and their effects. Some connections are made to the possible purpose of these methods, but again there is limited exploration of the significance of contextual factors.

Link your analysis of literary and linguistic features to the shaping of meaning and to the influence of context; try to evaluate context throughout your response, not just as part of an introduction.

This response was placed in level 3 for both AOs. Although some relevant points of comparison are identified, the candidate appears to lack the range of technical knowledge required to analyse the features in any depth. Similarly, understanding of the review genre and specific purpose of the texts is quite superficial.

2   Compare how the writers of Text B and Text C use language to convey their opinions in their reviews.

You must consider:

- the use of linguistic and literary features
- the influence of audience and purpose
- the contexts of the texts.

(30)

Both texts B and C are reviews of television dramas with aims to inform and entertain their audience. But also to try and persuade them to watch the TV shows. Text B would have a larger audience because it was published for 'the Mail Online' whereas text C was written only for 'FT Weekend magazine'.

The opening sentence of text B entices the audience because it's a criticism: 'Either this nation needs it's ears cleaned out, or its actors have to stop mumbling.' Christopher Stevens uses the ~~metaphor~~ personification 'nation needs its ears cleaned out' to humour the readers. However the bold opening statement of text C is no criticism at all: 'Saturday is complete again: Scandinavian noir is back.' This exaggeration suggests that this programme is so good and you're missing out if you don't watch it.

Text B uses a lexical set to reflect the criticism of the shows: that you can't hear what the characters are saying : 'mumbling', 'inaudible', 'muffled sound'

Whereas text C uses a lexical set to describe aspects of the plot which could entince the audience : 'dark world of terrorism', 'mass killing', 'poisonous grudges'. This semantic field of danger creates a sense of mystery around the drama, which would spark an interest in the reader. (✔✔)

Both texts include a sense of struggle in the characters. In text B it's due to the weather : 'howling blizzards'. This causes a struggle in the drama because no-one can get through : 'they're all trapped'. The use of the verb 'trapped' reflects their dilemma and entices the audience because they want to know how everyone survives. The sense of struggle in text C is through the personality of one of the protagonists who is cannot hold a 'normal relationship'. The verb 'appears' 'effort' is used

to describe how much she's trying and the audience want to ~~s~~ unravel how she deals with her relationships, and how big of a part this plays in the plot.

(✓)¹ Text B also however uses a semantic field to describe the plot of trapped: 'fatal arson, political corruption, martial misery'. The adjective 'fatal' is so powerful that it encourages the reader to keep reading so that they can discover more about the TV drama. (*2)

pair of
Both texts use positive ∧adjectives to describe the TV show and try to encourage the audience to look into it and watch it. Text B uses 'gripping and daft', the ~~adults~~ adjective 'gripping' suggests that you'll want to keep watching it. Text C uses 'rich' and 'vivid' to describe the scenes and characters. This is to try and persuade the audience because they may have never seen a ~~scandon~~ scandinavian drama before.

Finally both texts conclude their reviews with a bold, short syntax, declarative sentence. Text B says that trapped

'stormed to its finale'. The verb 'stormed' suggests that it ends powerful and efficiently. Text C says: 'The dark is all-pervasive' suggesting that there is

always darkness which adds an eery feeling to the drama.

In conclusion, both texts have the same purpose: to entince the readers to watch the TV dramas. However to do this text B focuses on the idea that they are scandainavian, and text C uses more imagery and descriptive language to describe the plot.

(×2) There is a second lexical set of plot action as the review describes 'Deutschland 83': 'stealing', 'seducing', 'fighting'. This lexical set of verbs reflects the large amount of action that occurs in this drama which interests the reader because they now know it's packed with adventures.

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

- Read the question carefully and follow its specific demands. This is particularly important for Question 1 but also for Question 2 where the description of the task can vary.

- Plan responses for Question 1 with a clear understanding of genre, audience, purpose and context. Focus on creating an appropriate voice, register and tone based on the task.

- Use a range of information from the source material for Question 1. Remember that this can be combined with additional points or anecdotes as appropriate and it is not necessary to follow the same structure as the original text.

- Remember, Question 1 is a creative task and does not require the use of technical literary or linguistic terminology, unless this is appropriate to the audience, purpose or context.

- Develop a flexible "toolkit" of frameworks that can be applied to a variety of texts for Question 2, along with a range of literary and linguistic terminology, rather than relying on prescriptive mnemonics or lists of features, as this can lead to "feature spotting".

- Consider contrasts or differences as well as similarities in the approaches of the writers of the texts for Question 2.

- Try to be familiar with the texts in the anthology as this will save time when planning.

- For Question 2, explore a range of other "unseen" texts to increase confidence when analysing and making perceptive connections with the anthology texts, particularly for audience and purpose.

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