

Examiners' Report
June 2015

GCE English 6EN03 01

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Introduction

This paper covered key aspects of the specification with a focus on language diversity and language change in the first section, and written and spoken language in the child language development section.

Each individual question is considered in this report but a general summary may be of benefit.

In Q1 (a) there was still a number of instances where students wrote on more than two features or tried to produce wide-ranging 'mini' analyses. Most candidates showed some awareness of concepts associated with English as a global language/second language. They demonstrated that centres had given this topic some consideration in their delivery of the specification and that candidates were able to adapt and apply their linguistic knowledge.

As in previous series', lower mark bands tended merely to identify features with little or no attempt to describe and explain, and/or showed insecurity with the key constituents. Higher band answers were careful to explain why features were present and explore the reasons for the appearance of the selected feature. Further, they were able to put the feature into context by referencing issues associated with American English, the growing importance of English to trade, and potential syntactical differences between different languages.

For Q1 (b) candidates need to remember the importance of covering a range of key constituents, including grammar, and not to focus to excess on more general issues like graphology – something that tended to characterise lower band answers. Higher band responses were characterised by an exploration of two or three features from each relevant key constituent. They gave careful consideration to the data's status as persuasive/informative texts, and considered not only how they achieved their purpose but also how they reflected changes in audience, society, culture and the form of English.

In Q2 (a) candidates had to demonstrate their knowledge of children's written language development, using key constituent-based examples from the data to support and illustrate their discussion.

Most candidates showed awareness of theories and issues but at lower bands this was often general: candidates tended to confuse theories or not mention them, specifically, at all. Additionally at this level, candidates often confused speech and writing and did not seem to be aware that the child's spoken language would be more advanced.

Higher band answers showed assured use of terminology, especially in the discussion of graphemes and phonemes and were able to integrate successfully a range of theories, including explanations of how children are taught literacy and the effects this can have.

Q2 (b) needed a knowledge of theories associated with the development of spoken language and key constituents. Many candidates showed an awareness of a range of theories and generally were able to recount them successfully, but lower bands tended to find it difficult to link them to language features or combined aspects of different theories.

Higher band responses referenced a range of theories and considered how applicable they were to the data. Such candidates were able to link a detailed range of language features to the theories and kept a clear focus on the data.

Question 1 (a)

This question allowed candidates to focus in depth on two examples from the text. Thereby, they could demonstrate both a firm grasp of the key constituents, and knowledge related to issues and concepts that underpin English as a global language/English as a second language. The 10 marks available reflect the length of response that is expected from candidates.

Despite the comments in previous reports, there were still some candidates who covered more than the expected two features (in which case the best two were credited). However, very few wrote context-based responses in which they discussed field, tenor, function and mode.

This question was answered mainly in terms of orthography and grammar/syntax. Candidates selected consistently the example of 'color' being spelled the American way. Many candidates also selected the 'enclosed you find' example, explaining that an auxiliary verb would be beneficial. The inconsistent use of articles was also a popular response. Overall, most candidates were able to identify relevant features and offered varying degrees of speculation as to why the feature occurred.

Lower band answers tended to be characterised by noting merely the differences between an example from the data and Standard English, with little attempt to describe or explain. At this level, there was a tendency to list non-standard features irrespective of relevance. Some candidates seemed judgemental, describing the writer as having an 'ignorance' of English or 'poor' spelling skills, which was not appropriate.

Responses in higher bands showed more detailed awareness of the issues faced by second language users and the role of English in world trade (often American English). As well as using linguistic terminology to great effect, such candidates offered suitably controlled discussions of the status of English as a global language to explain why a German was using it.

Popular selections included the American spelling of 'colour' (often including some discussion of why American spelling is different from that found in British English and why a German would use American English) and discussions of how syntax difference between German and English could result in non-standard word orders. There were also explorations of the issues associated with translating collocations/idioms.

This script was scored at the top of band 2 for both AO2 and A03 because the candidate showed a confident and plausible analysis of the features under discussion.

However, the student writes on three examples: two from orthography ('masured' and 'color') and one from syntax. In such instances, only the two best are awarded and this instance it was decided that marking would be based on 'color' and the syntax comment.

Since English is now considered a global language, many foreign writers will use it as a means of communication to converse internationally. ~~THAT~~ However, some linguists, such as David Crystal, have argued that there are variances of English acrosses nations that ~~all~~ many English speaking countries have their own branch of English. This writer is German and writing in a modern context to a reader of equal footing although there are non-standard features in the letter.

One ~~non-standard~~ non-standard variance concerns the writer's use of orthography. The writer uses "measured" and "colors". The former non-standard feature indicates that English is not the writer's first language as the Modern Standard English spelling would be "measured" therefore the writer may have simply missed the "e" grapheme due to lack of practiced orthography or the writer may be using phonetic spelling and their German dialect may not pronounce the diphthong thus the writer did not include both letters. The latter non-standard orthography feature of "colors" is likely to stem from the influence of American English. Since America is a powerful and influential country, its

form of English has a large influence on other countries learning English as a second language. Noah Webster's dictionary aimed to diverge and simplify the English of the time into a new American English to show their independence and our "colour" became "color" in America. This feature is likely to be an influence of American Standard English due to its vast influential writings that span the world.

The grammar in Text 1 also diverges from Modern Standard English. The writer uses "Enclosed you receive your order", which would be likely to be written as "Enclosed, you will receive your order" thus the writer uses ellipsis on the modal auxiliary verb "will" and also elides to a command, although it is arguable whether this is necessary here. This divergence shows English is not the writer's first language as their grammar patterns do not follow Standard English grammar conventions, which is likely to be due to different ~~grammar~~ sentence structures in their mother tongue; presumably German. English grammar varies largely from other countries and is seen different from American English grammar to some extent. Beyond the Grammar Space by me used other texts or the sources from Non-Standard British English.



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Examiner Comments

The candidate begins with a brief opening paragraph in which they show an understanding of English as a global language. This is used to explain why the writer was using English and why it may differ from more standard forms.

Although not ultimately credited, the discussion of 'masured' has worth and, since many other candidates analysed it, it is worth commenting on, briefly, here. Simple terminology such as orthography, grapheme and phonetic spelling could contribute to the demonstration of understanding of key constituents. The two explanations, although brief, have some plausibility.

The second example given contains a little more detail. The writer is aware that this has been influenced by American English (a fact identified by most who chose to analyse this but not expanded upon) and notes that American English now has more influence than other forms. The inclusion of a brief explanation as to why American spelling is different is most welcome.

For the second example, the candidate writes on syntax. The use of accurate linguistic terminology such as 'ellipsis' and 'modal auxiliary verb' demonstrates knowledge of the key constituents of language. They show understanding of issues associated with this type of language by explaining that the syntax may reflect the placement of words in the writer's first language.

AO2 = 4

AO3 = 4

Total = 8 marks



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Examiner Tip

It is often useful to draw on learning from different parts of the course to answer a question successfully.

This response achieves fewer marks than above in both AOs, having been placed at the bottom of band 2 for AO2 and the top of band 1 for AO3.

It has been included not only to demonstrate a less detailed analysis of 'color' but also because the second part of the response illustrates how a candidate's speculative points can be awarded.

The first feature that indicates English is not the first language of the speaker is the spelling of 'colour', this relates to orthography.

The writer who is German writes 'color', which is the American English way of spelling 'colour'.

This shows that the writer has studied English as a second language and has chosen to not add the 'u' into colour, which could indicate that English is not the first language and the writer has studied it outside of his work environment.

The American English way of spelling 'color' ~~has~~ is a more possible attraction to spelling it instead of the British English conventional way of 'colour'. As the word has less graphemes to write and phonemes to sound, which could indicate that the writer is lazy.

Another feature that indicates that English is not the first language of the writer is the sentence, "maybe you will lose ground by watching our overwhelming newspapers." The context in which the text is written in shows that the writer does not understand that

things that could be taken in a passive way in Germany, translated would not fit into context in the English language.

What the writer means to say is 'maybe you will enjoy our wallpapers, as they are nice' or something. But you can't 'lose ground' over looking at wallpapers. This example relates to lexis, as the lexis of the German writer when he's translated what to say may possibly not make much sense to the English reader.



ResultsPlus Examiner Comments

The treatment of 'color' is slightly more simplistic than the previous script. No thought is given to America's role in the world and the comments on the <ou> diagraph do not appear plausible or logical.

However, the second example shows a candidate who is willing to adapt linguistic knowledge and methods to new situations.

Candidates were not expected to have a knowledge of German (and if obvious knowledge were displayed it was not rewarded) but there is logic to the speculation about the use of capital letters in the writer's first language. The student notices that there is no pattern of use and so offers a third plausible point - 'typing error'.

A02 = 2 marks

A03 = 2 marks

Total = 4 marks



ResultsPlus Examiner Tip

Do not be afraid to use your linguistic knowledge to speculate as to why a feature is present. It is perfectly acceptable (and sometimes preferable) to offer a number of explanations for the presence or absence of a feature in the data.

Question 1 (b)

This question was concerned with change over time and presented candidates with two persuasive/informative texts concerned with health and beauty products.

Candidates were expected to use the data to discuss how the language has changed in relation to any social cultural and technological influences and how the language used reflected contextual factors such as function, tenor, field and mode. Additionally, the data gave some scope to discuss aspects of Early Modern English, such as lexis and orthography.

Most candidates took the approach of analysing each text in turn, although a significant number opted for an integrated approach that allowed for detailed comparison, and used the marks available to judge a suitable length for their response – usually four to five sides. It is worth noting that a sizeable number of candidates at all levels of achievement commented on the non-standard capital letters, whilst themselves omitting to use them for proper nouns. The quality of candidate's written work is assessed under AO1 and candidates would be advised to make sure such fundamental rules of formal written English are followed.

Most candidates were able to offer comment on some of the lexical differences between the texts, most notably the development of scientific lexis. Candidates in the lower bands often strayed too far into a discussion of the changing beauty habits of women without recourse to linguistic knowledge. Their responses were also characterised by long narrative accounts of the history of English and so lost their focus on the data. As in previous sittings of this unit, lower band candidates tended to focus mainly on graphology with long descriptive sections on punctuation and so did not display their linguistic knowledge.

Higher band responses were able to move the discussion beyond lexis and graphology and, in addition, confidently examined issues such as different sentence types and functions; the use, and effect, of modal verbs; and the different ways that the writers had established the tenor through specific pronoun uses.

Such candidates also considered how variation in context was highlighted and discussed how this could be linked to social and cultural change.

Most candidates at this level noted both the evolution of the advertising genre and the fact that similar rhetorical devices were detectable in both texts. Due consideration was also given to aspects of historical change in the language, with discussion and analysis of features such as interchangeable <i> and <y> and archaic morphology.

This is an extract from a response in which the candidate was placed in band 3 for AO1 and mid band 4 for AO2 and AO3.

They identify a number of relevant features but do not always explain clearly the

Text 2 is an example of Early Modern English writing and since ~~it's~~^{it's} ~~purpose~~^{purpose} is to advertise and appeal to an audience, many of its features adhere to its function of persuading. An example of this would be the use of the modified noun phrases, <excellent wash> and <greatest Quality>. These are used to attract the readers attention and since it is ~~an~~^{an} ~~ad~~^{ad} specifically, they have tried to make the product sound better. Modified noun phrases are also used in Text 3 from modern day English, <natural golden colour> and <^{Alpha} Alpha Hydroxy Acid>. These seem more subject specific as they are telling the reader exactly what colour the product is and exactly what type of acid it is without being general and less certain. ~~This~~^{This} could be because now a lot more testing and experimenting has been done so more of a definite claim can be made about the products. These however in text 2 have been non-standardly capitalised and could be used to make the adjectives ~~and~~^{and} stand out to the reader and may be deemed more important. As well as being slightly more general, in the text from 1690, ~~modal~~^{modal} auxiliary verbs of possibility are used like <may> ~~and~~^{and} as again beauty products hadn't yet developed as much. Modal auxiliary verbs of certainty are also used, <will> ~~and~~^{and} but in text 3 they are limited. This is because in text 3 the writer of the advertisement has decided to use more bold statements like <skin becomes younger and brighter> which cut out

significance of the areas they identify and so cannot reach the top of band 4 or move into band 5.

the need for a modal verb and can catch the attention of the reader solely by the ~~main~~ declarative sentence of what will definitely happen.

Both of these texts use a range of relative clauses which add more information to a statement being made, crucial to a text in the field of beauty treatments. Text 2 uses the clause < Powder for the teeth, which makes them as white as snow > on line 13. This is not a literal statement but aims to attract the reader into thinking that it could possibly be true and by using a comparable object like snow, a more extreme view and desire to try the product is constructed. Text 3 however uses relative clauses in a different way; not to persuade but to provide the reader with more factual information about the treatment. For example, < for ultimate result we recommend the salon treatments, which offer a stronger peel and of course ... >. This adds more information about what is further offered if they decide to take their advice.



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Examiner Comments

The candidate begins by identifying purpose. They demonstrate use of accurate terminology and knowledge of the key constituents by identifying modified noun phrases as a language feature that helps the texts achieve their function. The examples are clear but the explanation, '...tried to make the product sound better' is a little too general.

The writer of this response immediately compares these with text 3 but, again, is a little vague with explanations, merely citing these as 'subject specific'.

The candidate could have improved this response by thinking more specifically about any similarities and differences in the function of the modifiers and noun phrases.

The candidate's confidence with the application of the key constituents of language is again made apparent in the section on modal verbs. The use of accurate examples confirms this candidate's understanding. Although broadly accurate, the comment on 'limited use' of modal verbs in text 3 is a little sweeping.

The writer continues their discussion of grammar with a discussion of relative clauses and they integrate successfully a suitably brief discussion of a simile.

Many candidates noticed this but it was often mis-labelled and at lower bands candidates spent too long discussing it and so did not have time to produce a wide-ranging analysis. Again, the candidate attempts to draw a distinction between the two pieces of data but the results, although accurate, are not detailed enough to get into band 5.

It is worth noting that the candidate expresses themselves clearly and fluently throughout this response and this, alongside the range of accurate terminology used, contributes to their band 3 AO1 score.

AO1 = 8

AO2 = 11

AO3 = 10

Total = 29 marks



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Examiner Tip

Commenting on the graphology can be important but does not allow you to demonstrate linguistic knowledge.

Make sure that you attempt to discuss a range of features from each key constituent, including aspects of grammar.

Within text 2 we can find features highlighting the time period ~~the~~ it was written in, Early modern English. Such as, the 3rd person ~~the~~ verb ending of <ath> or <eth>. These forms lasted longer on auxiliary verbs ~~the~~ <to have> and <to do> although began to die out in ~~the~~ middle English due to them being replaced by modern standard <s> suffix to indicate grammatical relationship. Due to ~~the~~ invasions, first and second person inflections were lost previously ~~the~~ as relationship is now reflected through word order. We also find the ~~the~~ unstandard spelling of <Poysonous> which in modern day would be <poisonous>, this relates to the switching of <i> and <y> in ~~the~~ written texts in Middle English period, ~~the~~ when <i> was placed next to other minims (vertical stroke of pen to formate ~~the~~ graphemes) it was almost indistinguishable. Therefore, to reduce minim confusion it was generally replaced with a <y> although this didn't affect pronunciation ~~the~~. During this period it is inconsistent shown through standard spellings such as, <difficulty> and <mirache> this could be due to the introduction of cursive printing press in the 1400s pushing the need for standardisation. The nonstandard spelling of <winellter> and <freuler> highlight phonetic spelling as <ec>, <eh> and <eh> all represent the phoneme /w/ so ~~the~~ spellings differed but didn't affect pronunciation.

The time period of the text is relevant to issues described such as <small-pox> and <scurvy>, these issues aren't as common in modern day although in the 1600's this would have been a concern so are needed to be highlighted in medical service texts.

Within Text 2 there is a standard negative clause <shall never needs> showing a shift towards the use of word order instead of relying solely on high frequency of inflections. Although, we find some slight irregularities such as the relative clause <which keeps them all winter from chapping> where the predicator comes after the adverbial, this could be to highlight the time of year the text was produced and make patients concerned with cold weather and its affect to their appearance. They have also added the present participle <ing> to make the action seem ~~enging~~ like an ongoing issue that needs to be avoided.

The use of relative clauses such as the previous example, and <which if any person desire to be satisfied in> are placed to give extra detail to products available which is common and suitable in advertising texts. The relative clause <which is now dead> is unstandard as the use of <who> should be used to refer to a human being. Such lexis as <dead> and <poisonous> carry negative connotations, these would most likely be replaced by euphemism in modern day showing a change in attitude towards ~~health~~ health.

The text has a high frequency of adjectives such as <smooth>, <tender> and <excellent>, this is a persuasion technique found in adverts in order to interest the audience. These are relevant in modified noun phrases <white pots>, <excellent secrets> and <delicate past> which ~~are~~ add information to the effect of the products carrying positive connotations to shape audiences view of them making them more likely to purchase.



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Examiner Comments

This candidate chooses to begin with an overview of some of the Early Modern English features of text 2.

The section allows the candidate to demonstrate their understanding of issues associated with language change over time as well as displaying knowledge of the key constituents of language.

The candidate covers archaic morphology (with a minor error as they identify the verb ending as <ath>), interchangeable letters in which the candidate also notes the inconsistent use, a spelling change, and a suitably brief comment that the lexis reflects the concerns of the time period.

In lower bands, the discussion of archaic lexical features or those that reflected the time period were often too long and prevented candidates covering a range of features.

The candidate's paragraph on 'standard negative clause' is slightly less successful but the candidate shows a firm grasp of linguistic terminology when discussing the placement of the adverbial 'all winter' within a relative clause and they make a clear attempt to explain its position in the sentence.

The candidate links their next section by continuing the discussion of relative clauses and, in doing so, shows a clear ability to produce fluent and coherent written work. The function of such clauses is noted briefly and the candidate identifies a non-standard use in text 3. They use the opportunity to make some valid comments on lexical choice that would be considered less common today before offering some comments on adjectives in text 2.

Slightly more detailed analysis of adjectives is offered by this candidate than the one in the previous example, because they are identified as a 'persuasion technique' with a function to 'interest' the audience. These references to context, alongside close analysis of the key constituents, contributed to this candidate's band 5 score.

AO1 = 10

AO2 = 14

AO3 = 14

Total = 38 marks



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Examiner Tip

Use the marks available to gauge the length of your response and make sure that you cover both pieces of data equally.

Question 2 (a)

As in Q1 (a), this is a short response question worth 10 marks. In this case, the candidates were asked to display their knowledge of written language development.

The question was open-ended in that it did not prescribe two different key constituents and allowed candidates to discuss any two aspects they thought relevant. There were some issues with losing focus from the 'two examples' required by the question, perhaps because candidates were concerned they had not written enough.

The quality of the responses for this question showed that centres had done some detailed work on this area and the majority of candidates were able to identify at least the relevant features. Lower band candidates tended not to move beyond making simple observations on issues such as linearity and directionality, capital letters or noting that the child had used a picture. At this level, theories/theorists were unlikely to be referenced in any detail and some candidates linked Rachel's writing skills to theories about spoken language, rather than written language development.

Higher band responses typically introduced detail. Popular theorists like Vygotsky, Barclay, Kroll and Gentry were referenced plausibly (in many cases candidates used more than one) and terminology such as grapheme and phoneme, as well as the IPA was used to give a more detailed exploration of relevant key constituents. Wider contextual factors such as phonics, environmental print and the purpose of the text were all considered routinely, at this level.

The following script is in the bottom of band 2 for AO1 and top of band 1 for AO3. It represents a typical response to this data.

Text 4 and 5 are both recount pieces that have been produced most likely in as a task set by a teacher. Text 4 shows evidence of Chrol's consolidation theory as she ~~misses~~^{mistakes} the digraph <e> for <ai> in 'agen'; ~~she~~ She knows that <en> is needed to create the sound /en/ but she just does not understand the different spellings. ~~for Rachel is~~ ~~we understand that Rachel~~ ~~with~~ ~~see~~ Because Rachel is in the consolidation stage we understand that her accent will play a role in how things are spelt. We see this with 'soo' (saw), her idiolect could have influenced the way she writes it down. 'resrot' is found in Text 5 meaning 'restaurant', the use of all the vowels in this noun could have confused her, making her pick out the ~~obvious~~ obvious sounds in 'restaurant', being the 'res' and 'ot'.

Being a recount text we understand that stories will have had an effect on her chosen words. Rachel uses adverbials to make it sound like a story, 'Over the holidays' and 'the pigs never saw the wolf ~~again~~^{again}'. She does this to make the writing feel ~~more~~^{realistic} and professional, like the stories that she would have read/listened to. This could be an example of environmental print making a mark on Rachel's writing, as said before she will have read it somewhere, she is copying it to impress, and show off her knowledge.



The candidate understands the purpose of the writing ('recount pieces') and notes that they have been set by a teacher but does not use this contextual information to link to any specific aspects of the data.

The candidate references Kroll (in this instance, the mis-spelling has not affected the score) before selecting 'again' as the example for discussion. This selection was very popular and does provide an excellent example of phonetic spelling.

The candidate attempts to show how this links to Rachel's pronunciation of the word but there are limitations to the discussion. Whilst the candidate attempts to use the IPA to show Rachel's pronunciation of the word and later acknowledges briefly that this could be related to accent, they do not consider the standard pronunciation, draw a distinction between simple vowels and diphthongs, and nor do they explain the phonics teaching method that may have led Rachel to adopt this strategy.

The brief mention of other spelling issues has been discounted, because it is not as detailed as the previous feature or the discussion that follows.

The candidate's second credible feature is an analysis of a fronted adverbial that the candidate links to narrative writing skills. The use of the terminology and accurate example shows that they have an understanding of this aspect of the key constituents. The mention of 'stories she would have read/listened to' shows an understanding of how environmental print may affect a child's development of literacy.

AO2 = 3

AO3 = 3

Total = 6 marks



If you wish to discuss dependence on phonology, it is useful to use the IPA to represent the spoken version of the word so that you can compare phoneme/grapheme correspondence.

For the short response questions it is essential that you select the most productive features. Some brief planning may allow you to decide what features best allow you to demonstrate your linguistic knowledge.

Question 2 (b)

This question presented candidates with a transcript of spoken data produced in the family home and asked candidates to comment on the children's language development and the influence on it.

Candidates found the data engaging and most candidates were able to apply at least some key constituents to the data and make some references to relevant theories.

Lower band answers tended to refer to 'limitations' and 'errors' rather than describing and accounting for non-standard features. Even at lower bands, knowledge of theories was frequently evident but these tended to be overlong descriptive accounts and were often 'bolted on', rather than related to specific examples in the transcript.

Some candidates expected to see development in the children's language in the course of the data and either 'invented' such development or expressed their disappointment in the child at not finding any.

Better responses highlighted a range of developmental features, which were explored in detail. This included giving explicit reasons why the place and manner of articulation of certain phonemes caused difficulty for a child of Ben's age and Ben's creativity in inventing the lexeme 'crumsy,' using his knowledge of morphological patterns.

Theories were applied aptly to the occurrence of specific features and the role of the parents in Ben and Ella's spoken language development was explored confidently. It was gratifying to see candidates using examples from the data to refute certain developmental theories as well as supporting them.

Some candidates noted Ben's role in Ella's development and detected evidence of early conversational skills developing in the interactions between Ella and her father.

This extract comes from a response that was placed just into the top band for AO1 and AO2. It was placed at the top of band 4 for AO3 because despite there being a range referenced, there was some underdevelopment of key constituents. Overall, it is a clear example of a productive approach to the data.

Ben, who is the eldest sibling (at 2 years and 11 months) begins the spoken text in a sentence in which he repeats the word 'people' four times, and then again twice in the next few sentences. This clear repetition could be indicating that 'people' is a new word that Ben has only recently learned how to properly use or pronounce, and he is actively using the word a lot because he likes the sound of it when it is spoken, or wants to practice using and pronouncing it correctly. Ben's mum also uses the word twice after Ben does, which may be to get him used to hearing the word being spoken by somebody else, and encouraging him to use and practice it.

Ben's mum asks him 'how many people' with a clear emphasis and stress on the word 'many'. This is likely to have been ~~used~~ used as an attempt to encourage Ben to give an answer to the question, so that he can begin to establish the concept of turntaking within a conversation, which is a key aspect of spoken conversation which needs to be fully understood. As well as this, ~~the other~~

both the mother and the father choose to use a high level of interrogatives to encourage responses, such as 'is she big?' and 'does she look lovely?'. Both interrogatives and stress on certain words are aspects of child Directed Speech (or parentese) which interactionist ~~theorist~~ theorist Bruner suggested was used by parents or another more knowledgeable other in order to assist with the linguistic developments of a child in regards to speech.



ResultsPlus Examiner Comments

The candidate begins with a series of comments on Ben's initial utterance in the transcript and takes a slightly unexpected approach but, nevertheless, one that indicates an understanding of the processes a child goes through when developing vocabulary.

The assertion that Ben is using 'people' because it is a new word is plausible and the candidate links the mother's contributions not only to reinforcing the use of this word but also to modelling turn-taking skills.

Throughout this initial section, the candidate writes in a clear and accessible manner and understands aspects of the development process. A little more specific terminology here, such as adjacency pair, would have added more depth to this section of the candidate's response.

In the subsequent section, the candidate continues by considering other aspects of family interaction, with some comments on interrogatives and child-directed speech. Some basic terminology such as interrogatives (a term surprisingly not used by many candidates) is present but the candidate could have gone further, here, by considering the types of interrogatives used and how the children respond to them.

AO1 = 8

AO2 = 13

AO3 = 12

Total = 33 marks



ResultsPlus Examiner Tip

If you are going to reference a theory associated with child language development, you should explain it briefly (to demonstrate your understanding) and its relevance to the data.

If possible, you should consider introducing more than one theory and may, if relevant, use the data to refute any of the theories you have studied.

This is an extract from a candidate who has produced a fluent and controlled answer, with reference to a range of issues but with some limitations.

The range of key constituents covered in the full answer was not as wide as needed to meet the higher mark bands and so the response was placed in the bottom of band 4 for AO2 and 3.

In text b, Ben and Ella both have their spoken language developed by their parents, as well as each other. An example of this would be now when Ben says <the people coming> and <this people> the mother asks <how many people> with a particular focus on <many>. This is because she can see that Ben knows the word people and what it means but by modelling how he should use it and exaggerating the context it should be used, she subtly influences how he should use it. This could link to social interaction as the mother isn't overtly correcting Ben or even telling him it is incorrect at all, she ~~goes~~ just approaches it in a way that he might or might not take notice of which at this stage she isn't too concerned over. Another way in which social interaction is used is through the use of Ben's father asking a question, <is she big?>, again putting stress on the adjective and encouraging a conversation with Ben. Straight after this he recasts the question to <is she a big girl now?> to a more specific requirement, again encouraging a more detailed response. This may be because the conversation is being held in the morning over breakfast and as a distraction over the toys Ben is playing with, his father is trying to provoke a conversation.

When pronouncing the word <rabbit>, Ella substitutes the sound /r/ for /w/ as they are both made of the front of the mouth;

/w/ being easier for a child of this age to pronounce. This could ~~refer~~ link to the nativist theory, not that language is innate but that by trial and error she would be able to produce the sound correctly. After attempting to say <rabbit> she makes an indecipherable sound which could possibly be another attempt at pronouncing the word under her breath before changing her mind completely, declaring that it is a <whale shark>. This shows that she has given up on saying <rabbit> so has replaced it with a word starting in a phoneme she knows she can make, /w/. Even though the object probably isn't a whale shark since the mother later on brings back up the rabbit, she dismisses this and carries on talking to Gen about the whale shark, allowing behaviourism to be dismissed. This is because the mother hasn't attempted at all to help him say rabbit and hasn't modelled it for him. For now, she has let him talk about something else without questioning it and has still been able to carry on the conversation. This may be because he is still only 2 years and 11 months old and for now his early stages of speech are still more important.



After acknowledging the role of all family members in the developmental process (and thus hinting at an understanding of a core issue), like most responses, this begins with a discussion of Ben's first series of utterances.

The example is linked to a developmental theory and core words such as 'modelling' and 'subtly influences' show this candidate has confident knowledge of the social interactionist theory.

The candidate shows some confident use of linguistic terminology when discussing how the father uses his questions but the candidate does not discuss the type of questions used, missing an opportunity to display their knowledge of key constituents.

The use of 'recast' and 'encouraging a more detailed response' further demonstrates their knowledge of the interactionist theory and child-directed speech (even though it is not mentioned by name).

Once again, some opportunities for development are missed – the candidate could have described the difference between the two interrogatives and could have examined how Ben responds to them.

In the section on phonology, the candidate confuses the two children by giving Ella the credit for Ben's utterances. This in no way affects the quality of their response and is probably just an error brought on by the pressure of referring quickly to the data. There is some understanding of speech sound here but there are limitations (preventing the candidate achieving highly in AO3). However, they do understand that substitution tends to occur around sounds the child finds difficult.

It would have benefitted the candidate to have discussed a wider range of examples and to have speculated as to when this feature was standardised.

This key constituent also allows the candidate to display their knowledge of nativist theory and it is explained briefly. Although a little more detail could have been added to this definition there is enough to gauge the candidate's understanding.

The speculation concerning what happens during the 'indecipherable' section of the transcript is plausible and interesting and allows the candidate to reference a third theory but behaviourism is not explained at this stage in the analysis.

AO1 = 8

AO2 = 11

AO3 = 10

Total = 29 marks



For child development questions it is often relevant to describe and comment on the linguistic skills that a child has acquired successfully, as well as on areas the child is still finding difficult.

Paper Sumamry

Once again, it was clear that centres had worked hard to prepare their candidates for Unit 3 and that the candidates were eager to display their knowledge. Most candidates demonstrated that they had acquired some knowledge of the key topics covered by the specification and there were very few who did not identify at least some issues in the data provided.

However, there are a few general areas of which candidates should be aware. Based on their performance on this paper, candidates are offered the following advice.

- Candidates need to understand the importance of covering a range of key constituents when analysing the data in Q1 (b). A focus on graphology and punctuation quickly becomes descriptive and does not allow candidates to meet the criteria of 'range' referenced in the higher bands of the mark scheme.
- Candidates need to keep their focus on the data presented for analysis, especially in Q1 and Q2 (b). If it is appropriate to make reference to issues around standardisation for Q1 (b) these should be done briefly and succinctly. Similarly in Q2 (b), candidates should ensure that any reference to a developmental or instrumental theory is supported by clear exemplification from the data.
- For child development questions it is often relevant to comment on what a child can do successfully, as well as areas that the child is still finding difficult.
- Avoid 'feature spotting' by always relating a language feature to a language issue or contextual factor.
- Candidates should be aware of their own language use with regards to capital letters etc and avoid the use of colloquial language, in order to achieve higher marks under aspects of AO1.

Grade Boundaries

Grade boundaries for this, and all other papers, can be found on the website on this link:

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