

Examiners' Report
June 2018

GCE English Language 9EN0 01

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Introduction

The purpose of this report is to provide centres with an insight into the assessment process and give an overview of how candidates approached each question. This series, candidates engaged positively with the data and produced some developed and analytical responses. Responses demonstrated that the texts provided enough source material to allow candidates to achieve in the higher levels and accommodate weaker candidates, although there was a decrease in the amount of candidates applying a critical and evaluative approach required for level 5. Candidates' approach to their analysis demonstrated appropriate knowledge and understanding of the requirements of each question but the majority of candidates tended to be more successful on question one highlighting a need for a more developed understanding of the criteria for question two.

There were a few candidates who were unprepared for the standard of the examination and this was evident by the lack of content within responses, applying a descriptive approach or dedicating more time to one question which resulted in one response which did not attempt to cover all aspects of the question. Candidates are encouraged to dedicate a realistic amount of time to each question to access the full range of marks available. As with last year, there were a small percentage of candidates who wrote their responses in the incorrect section of the answer booklet. In the event of this happening, candidates should signpost this error so that examiners can take appropriate action to ensure all work is marked and awarded. Centres are encouraged to provide candidates with opportunities to familiarise themselves with the content and format of the examination paper, ensuring that they have a clear understanding of the requirements of each question before the exam.

The paper is divided into two sections, providing an opportunity for an extended comparative analysis in both Section A and Section B. Candidates are invited to analyse four texts representative of the spoken and written modes of language. Each section contains one question worth 30 marks each. Candidates must answer both questions.

Section A: Individual Variation: This section provides two 21st century linked texts/data assessing candidates understanding of how individuals convey personal and social identity. In this series, candidates were required to analyse an example of written language and spoken language. Text A was a blog post from an artist published on their professional website and Text B was a transcript from a hair vlogger addressing an online audience.

Section B: Variation over Time: This section provides two unseen, thematically linked texts from two different time periods assessing candidates understanding of historical variation. This series, the theme was sea journeys and candidates compared two written texts; a document published in 1578 and an article from a travel brochure published in 2016.

Question 1

This question appeared to be answered more successfully than question two with some candidates identifying a range of different linguistic methods which the two producers used to convey identity. The data was accessible for the candidates, as is demonstrated by the vast majority of candidates scoring in Level 2 - 4. Candidates were able to compare both texts simultaneously addressing similarities and differences between the texts. Those placed in the higher levels covered a range of language features making some sophisticated points regarding grammatical structures. They were able to link language to context to discuss how the speaker/ writer displayed their social and personal identity. Concepts and issues were applied with some purpose and enhanced the discussion of identity.

Higher performing candidates used linguistic terminology accurately and exemplification was often discriminate. There was a clear focus on AO4 and strong candidates were able to make perceptive and insightful comments regarding A's struggle and detachment from her Korean background. Some reflected on B's pride in her ethnic and regional identity linking this to mode and audience successfully. This was enhanced by application of theory such as Giles' accommodation theory. Often candidates did not engage with the phonological elements of B and simply offered a description of her speech as opposed to using terminology and linking this to the presentation of identity. Some responses considered the idea of youth sociolect linking to the mode and audience which was more successful. There were a number of responses that made prescriptive comments about B's class or intellect demonstrating misunderstanding in their phonological analysis. This was sometimes supported with reference to Jean Aitchisons' Damp Spoon Theory attributing laziness as the reason for accent features as opposed to linking to mode and regional variation.

Most responses were awarded in Level 3, reaching Level 4 when they had considered more complex ideas about the identity in each. Higher performing candidates were able to identify the frustration at being misunderstood felt by B making links to prosodics and A's sense of disappointment and isolation with reference to pragmatics. Mid-level candidates were able to recognise the different experiences of the producers identifying as mixed race and discussed their identity with links to professionalism, building brand identity to attract subscribers and an understanding of how they connected to their audiences. In a few cases there were very fluent and perceptive responses hindered by a lack of AO1 terminology or grounding in the specifics of the data which prevented them scoring within the upper levels.

Lower performing candidates chose superficial elements of the frameworks to comment on and did so with little development or depth, often with no theoretical discussion or overly explained theory that actually showed misunderstandings of core ideas or were irrelevant to the data. Application of gender theory was often very descriptive and didn't enhance their analysis. Some candidates did not pick up on the gender of each producer and often referred to them as 'he' - reading the texts more carefully is something that would prevent this confusion. The discussion of language features tended to revolve around lexical choices which were often simplistic, showing broad knowledge. Concepts and issues were often bolted on using phrases such as 'this shows convergence', with little explanation as to how.

being a discussed issue on the political agenda. Text B also shows interest in embracing culture through identity, most prominently in the the completion of the "Mixed gin tag." In this way, the ~~word~~ lexical item "tag" has semantically shifted in the context of youtube to become a video which many people compare with their own experiences in mind; thus "Cuny Cockney", the name she has chosen to be known by, is almost juxtaposing the stereotypes of both having Afro-Caribbean hair and being cockney,



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This candidate recognises the similarities between both identities embracing their culture. In this extract, they show a good awareness of mode and analyse the lexical choices within the name and branding of Text D's youtube channel examining how she combines a physical feature and regional accent to convey her mixed ethnicity to an online audience.

Text A primarily focuses on the field of Korean culture, the producer connects to this field through her social identity as a mixed race Korean/British woman. She approaches this social identity in a casual manner, blending her heritage as a 'Korean' with the bound morpheme '-ness' in order to act as a quantifier. This illocutionary act implies that she does not identify entirely with Korean culture and therefore contributes to her mixed-race social identity. The text producer's desire to address her race in 'a more direct way' along with the pragmatic implication of the distaste of her father's method of upbringing through the sarcastic utterance 'for some reason', shows her pride in her heritage and this pride manifests itself as her personal identity. This identity is transmitted as the producer wishes to build a ^{positive} tenor with other mixed race artists in the audience to not only connect with them but encourage them to share their views and heritage.



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This candidate shows good understanding of the identity presented within Text A and supports their discussion with relevant examples from the text as well as a reference to pragmatics to convey pride in wanting a connection to both cultures. Their points are further developed with links to function and connecting with the audience.



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Embed theories within your response, where relevant, and link features you discuss to the development of identity or contextual factors.

Question 2

The performance in this question seemed less secure than question one. Many candidates struggled to effectively explore and explain the features of language change between the two texts, often resorting to a descriptive identification of features and a neglect of Text D analysis. As with last year, candidates did focus too much on historical events in their analysis often going into great detail of events such as Caxton's printing press, Johnson's dictionary, Lowth's grammar books and the great vowel shift. The information provided was not always accurate and candidates' digressions limited opportunities to engage in focused analysis of both sets of data. More successful candidates were able to demonstrate historical knowledge concisely in a few sentences, embedding it to support points with links to function or audience. Candidates are encouraged to maintain a focus on the data and avoid writing historical essays with limited linguistic analysis or reference to data.

High performing candidates effectively explored the concepts of language change, including ideas about religion, technological advancements and social attitudes. Most students were able to engage better with Text C than D. Strong candidates wrote perceptively about orthographical change in particular, and the strongest responses located their discussion within an understanding of the changing religious and social climates of the two texts, rather than just listing the differences between them. Candidates who dealt best with Text D were able to identify the persuasive function linking to the field of luxury, relaxation and ease of modern day travel targeting a high-end clientele. This was effectively compared to the dangerous and life-threatening tone presented in Text C highlighting the progression of sea travel from the discovery of new lands to a leisure activity.

The strongest candidates also considered how the pre-modification and post modification of the noun phrases used to describe the features and activities of the cruise ship demonstrated the changing roles of travel compared to Text C. There was also strong analysis of grammatical elements such as relative clauses and adverbials linked to function and audience. Less successful candidates focused their analysis on Text C and struggled to explain the reasons for change beyond 'it was pre-standardisation,' showing only a general understanding of the key issues whilst others simply spotted archaic features without linking to the context or the data. The majority of the candidates successfully identified the friendly, personal tone of Text D to convey enjoyment and persuade the audience as well as recognising Text C as a personal account of a journey with the purpose of providing an accurate record of events.

Overall, most candidates appeared able to produce detailed and extended pieces about the texts in each question suggesting that most candidates split their time evenly across the two texts. Some candidates produced long responses which only detailed the historical context of Text C, used limited terminology and failed to apply their knowledge to the data to demonstrate understanding.

in terms of lexis, both texts differ in their lexical field likely due to the mode and audience. Text C has a lexical field of perils with "devil", "stormes" and "daunger". This creates an entertaining narrative that the voyagers were able to overcome with God's help. The ~~the~~ field of "God" is also prevalent which reflects the more religious society of the 16th century. However, text D focuses on a ~~more~~ tone of relaxation with "warm sunny glow" and "~~good~~ welcoming".

This is likely due to the mode of a brochure needing to sell the holidays, and would want its audience to feel 'excitement' and book the holiday. This, again, is to do with the increase of technology and globalisation allowing first-hand travel in modern day, compared to the purely storytelling aspect of travel writing in the past. However, both texts are



The extract demonstrates direct comparison between the fields of Text C and Text D to convey the differences in tones making links to function and audience. They support their points with relevant examples from both sets of data ensuring effective comparison. They embed points within their discussion showing awareness of changes in religious beliefs and also narrative formats. They do miss opportunities to use terminology such as identifying 'welcoming' as a verb modifier and 'warm sunny glow' as a noun phrase. Further exploration of the religious field could also develop the point that the sailors felt their fate was out of their control and attributed their survival of the storm to their belief in God. This could contrast with the relaxed and safe lifestyle provided on board the cruise ship by the staff and ship's features.



Use all opportunities to apply terminology in your response to meet AO1 and engage in direct comparison between the features in both sets of data.

Paper Summary

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

- Employ effective time management in the examination to ensure that appropriate time is spent on each question in relation to the assessment objectives.
- Read the data carefully to avoid errors regarding the gender of the writer or speaker. Candidates are not penalised for these mistakes but it will impact on understanding and relevance of analysis if theories of gender are applied.
- Use terminology throughout your response.
- Ensure you refer to the sources in both questions and support your points with evidence from the texts.
- Comment on a range of features and address both texts equally. Do not limit your response to one set of data or to one discussion point.
- In question two, don't limit your answer to only discussing historical features and events making no reference to the data. Consider other contextual factors to produce a detailed effective comparison.
- Make any discussion regarding historical events relevant and concise. Points can be supported with a few sentences - pages of information regarding Caxton's printing press or the great vowel shift will digress from the main criteria required for question 2.

Grade Boundaries

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

<http://www.edexcel.com/iwantto/Pages/grade-boundaries.aspx>

