

Exemplar Candidate Work

GCE English Language

OCR GCE in English Language: H469

Unit: F651 Question 2

This booklet is designed to accompany the OCR GCE English Language specification for teaching from September 2008.

GCE English

Unit F651: The Dynamics of Speech

This resource has been prepared by OCR to assist teachers in interpreting the requirements of the specification and associated assessment. Students who have taken the January 2009 assessment have kindly given permission for us to use their answers as exemplar candidate work, for which we pass on our thanks to both them and their centres. Their responses are supported by commentary from a senior OCR examiner.

Please note that this resource is provided for advice and guidance only and does not in any way constitute an indication of grade boundaries or endorsed answers.

Section A: Speech and Children

Candidate 1:

For January 2009, the passages were as follows:

Question 1: transcription of three girls at school – Fay is 13, Lisa is 9 and Jenny is 7 – role-playing a radio phone-in programme.

Question 2: extract from *Raven*, a magical fantasy television game-show for children, in which three ten-year-olds have been given various tasks to perform.

Question 3: transcription of a professional boxer talking to an amateur.

Question 4: transcription of a professional psychic, who claims he can talk to dead people, ‘performing’ to an audience.

The following commentaries highlight the strengths and weaknesses of each candidate’s responses. Each answer is placed in a Band, and each script is given an overall Band.

Question 2: Candidate answer	Examiner's commentary
<p>Within the transcript, which is in dialogue format, there is evidence of the children using encourage language in order to help each other. The format of the dialogue is referential, with slight evidence of expressive language.</p> <p>The first example of language that will help is when Leegan instructs - "you make the outline of a circle". This is direct and the use of the passive voice enables the other two children to comprehend what she is saying, without her coming across as bossy.</p> <p>There is evidence of encouragement within the statement. "GREAT well done". This shows that although the children are all the same age, they have the ability to praise each other which is indirectly, helping.</p> <p>It is also relevant that Talen uses praise - "that's GREAT that's GREAT" the repetition used here will help Leegan's self belief, enhancing the quality of what she does.</p> <p>Talen again reassures Leegan further on in the transcript - "I can't do this (.) I can't do this (.)" "Just try the best you can"</p> <p>This will improve Leegan's confidence, enabling the group to complete the task.</p> <p>The final evidence of encouragement in order to help is near the end of the transcript when Taien reassures Leegan that what she has done is acceptable - "that it, BRILLIANT that's cool". The stress on the word 'Brilliant' is to confirm to Leegan that (Talen) is proud of what she has done and thinks she has done well. Also, this is the first part of the speech where a 'modern' word has been used; Cool. This could be to accentuate how well Talen thinks she has done.</p> <p>Reassurance is the main way language is used between the children in order for them to help each other, however they all use prompts to make sure one another feels chafed for example:</p> <p>"Arla: right how many lines are there". This shows the difference, in young children, between boys and girls, and indeed individual children, in that girls use their sense of</p>	<p>The AO1 dimension of this script is promising. The candidate focuses on salient features from the transcript, and the answers are structured competently. However, both answers fall just short of Band 4 <i>competence</i> by being suddenly abandoned.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • immediate focus on question: identifies 'encouraging' language • asserts that dialogue is referential / expressive • tries to characterise Leegan's tone, but makes error (AO1) with "passive voice" – nonetheless, understanding of the <i>dynamics</i> is secure • using evidence from / reference to transcript • notices use of 'praise', and explores how its use affects the dynamics of the interaction • notices 'reassurance' • tending to trace very effectively the <i>emotional</i> dynamics – help / encouragement / confidence – a little at the expense of the <i>linguistic</i> dimension • identifies emphatic stress on BRILLIANT • comments on first/only instance of a 'modern' word ("cool") • comments on use of 'prompts' and supports this with an example of a <i>question</i> • suggests that this shows how girls use initiative more than boys • comments on addition of adjective "blue" to the initial "it's a leaf a blue leaf" • answer is then abandoned! <p>Overall, the focus on the task – <i>discuss the ways in which the children here use language to help each other carry out their tasks</i> – and the understanding of the dynamics of interaction are at least competent. However, the <i>linguistic</i> dimension is less developed; and the answer is suddenly abandoned mid-sentence.</p> <p>The same happens with the second answer. It may be – although this is not a consideration for a marker – that the candidate had a time-allocation plan which she/he stuck to rigidly.</p>

enitiative more freely.

Talen uses languages to help Leegan's understanding when describing the leaf. "so it's a leaf a blue leaf" He goes from describing it as just a 'leaf' and then he adds the adjective blue to give a more realistic account.

It is apparent that the children use langu

Section A: Speech and Children

Candidate 3:

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Question 4: transcription of a professional psychic, who claims he can talk to dead people, ‘performing’ to an audience.

The following commentaries highlight the strengths and weaknesses of each candidate’s responses. Each answer is placed in a Band, and each script is given an overall Band.

Question 2: Candidate answer

The transcript in question 2 is an extract from a television game show for children called Raven. The speaker, who are all ten years old, use language in different ways to help each other carry out their tasks.

The register of the transcript is informal as the three children are speaking to each other as friends as they try to complete their task.

In terms of the Lexical features of the transcript, the vocabulary used is that of standard English. There doesn’t seem to be evidence of characteristics of a particular accent, so I think that there might be general standards.

English dialect used here as the children don’t use many slang terms within the transcript, apart from “cool”.

The language used in the transcript is quite restricted as people outside this conversation would probably not understand the context of what they refer to what they are doing “okay right, make it into a circle” Yet, within this conversation, all of the children are completely aware of what is being

Examiner’s commentary

The *Quality of Written Communication* (assessed within AO1) of this script – at least in the first answer – is higher than that of the first two scripts. Organisation is evident, and expression is clear, enabling the candidate to develop and explain points in some detail. These AO1 qualities begin to fragment (under pressure of time?) in q.3.

- notes that register is informal: children speaking to each other as friends
- astutely comments that lexis is Standard English, as is accent/dialect; only ‘slang’ term is “cool”
- comments that language is ‘restricted’ – presumably means that it’s *context-dependent*
- develops this point with good examples of *deixis* – but doesn’t use the terminology
- clear explanation of how *back-channelling* provides positive feedback and helps with the task
- developed explanation of how an example of a prosodic feature – intonation – reveals tone and communicates the speaker’s meaning to the others

referred to as 'it'.

Back-channelling is also used as a way of helping each other to carry out their tasks, as they show each other that they understand what one another are saying by providing positive feedback, "right". This enables and encourages the speaker to move forward in what they are saying.

The speakers also use prosodic features such as intonation, and stress and increased volume. The use of intonation, "does that look okay", enables the other children to understand what context the word 'okay' has been used in as intonation can show if sarcasm is being used, through the tone a word is said in. However, in this case, the intonation used on the word 'okay' presents to the other children that Leegan has finished the circle and is looking for and encouraging a response from the others.

The other children respond to her with positive feedback through hyperbole language "Great". "Great" is said with increased volume and stress to show that the children are happy with Leegan's effort, which will give encouragement to her so she feels confident to continue. This basic human psychology is like the ideas of Skinner, whose theory was that children learn language through reinforcement, so by receiving praise for her efforts, she is confident to move on.

Elisions is also used in the transcript, "right last part last question! so that the children can communicate quickly between each other, however the understanding of what she means isn't lost.

Also overlapping occurs within the speech which breaks the politeness principled Robin Lanoff "you need to // I don't understand I can't". This is a common occurrence within informal conversations and in this situation; it indicates to the interrupted speaker that, the other speaker desperately needs to put across a point that she feels is important to what's going on.

In conclusion, there are many different ways in which language is used by the children in order to help each other carry out their tasks. Prosodic features such as stress(ing) on words and increased the context of a particular word or phrase so

- notes how examples of hyperbolic language with emphatic stress create encouragement
- links this neatly to language development theory of Skinner
- comments on use of an example of elision for speed of communication
- notes overlapping, and explains how it works
- lengthy concluding section, in which earlier points are re-visited, summarising rather than adding to the argument

Overall, this is *developed and coherently detailed discussion*.

they can recognise whether it is being said in a sarcastic tone or whether it is trying to provoke a response.

Back challenging is one of the most important features that enables the children to help each other carry out their tasks as they give positive feedback to one another. Along with hyperbole language, the children seem to praise each other for their efforts, which is encouraging and owing confidence to one another to continue with what they are doing.

Candidate 4:

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Question 2: Candidate answer

This transcript is taken from a children’s entertainment show. It shows three young children, each with fantasy name trying to complete different tasks. It is based for a child of around a similar age; in this case ten.

It is clear to see from the start that the team has to work together ‘Talen’ seems to take control of the situation with him instructing the others in what to do.

We can see this from dialect like ‘make it into a circle’. Also with this in reserved pronunciation it is easy to understand. However this is far from the only factor that tells us ‘Talen’ is in control. Leegan looks for his approval in what she does ‘does that look okay’ The rise in pitch seems as if she is questioning her actions and in doubt.

On line 19 it seems that Leegan pervers and is confused by the task” I can’t do this (.) I can’t do this’ with it repeated twice and with a fast pace it translates to both the audience and Talen that she is struggling.

Talen tires to give simple instructions using single sentences to help Leegan understand and complete the task. It transforms from the vague instruction ‘and it goes sort of down from here

Examiner’s commentary

The *Quality of Written Communication* (assessed within AO1) of this script is a weakness: terminology is not always correct, and there are many minor errors. However, when the focus is on specific detail, some more competent analysis begins to develop. At best, this becomes developed. A consideration of the overall balance of strengths and weaknesses places this script in low-to-middle Band 4.

- weak opening, largely paraphrasing the information in the question; then settles to focus on the task
- notes that Talen is ‘instructing’
- confused references to ‘dialect’ (means *dialogue*?) and to RP
- astute comments on the dynamics: links questioning intonation with idea of seeking approval and expressing doubt
- infers Legan’s panic and confusion from her repetitions
- increasingly secure analysis: notes shift from *vague* to more precise language, and identifies encouragement
- comments on choices of language and on features of intonation
- discusses politeness ‘policy’ (means *strategy/principle*, but point is entirely valid)
- struggling to discuss lexis and sentence structure
- recovers to note closed questions; gives examples

to here'.

Encouragement is also a key factor within the transcripts.

When Leegan is struggling, Talen offers support 'do the best you can' this may have helped release at least some of the pressure off Leegan shoulders. Finally when Leegan does do as instructed by Talen he uses a superlative to exclaim his pleasure, 'BRILLIANT' He increase in the volume would also indicate to both Leegan and the audience that Talen was pleased.

Throughout the transcript Talen uses the politeness policy. He offers option, encouragement and I personally feel at no point was Leegan belittled or made to feel uncomfortable by Talen actions. This would have helped Leegan as it may have enabled her to handle the pressure better than if Talen had used a high 'snappy' tone.

There is encouragement all through the transcript from Talen. With Leegan portrayed to be the weaker of the three she is encouraged greatly. A most of which the stressed again to show she is doing well 'GREAT', 'BRILLIANT'.

The lexis used is not very advanced and there are few complex sentences in the transcript.

With the intended audience of the show based at young children there were less likely to understand, technical vocabulary.

Also within the transcript here there a number of closed questions requiring yew or no answers. It is mostly Leegan asking there is she seeks the opinions of the other two children. "does that look okay" which doesn't get a yes or no response get a positive word 'Great' is positive telling Leegan she is doing well.

On Line 32 Talen uses the word 'Cool'. This is commonly known by most us to referring to the temperature of something. However in most social groups involving children 'cool' translates as a good thing. It is positive opinion for example. 'your top is cool' is another context in which it could be used. By using words that relate to their social groups it also bolte the intended audience and Leegan to understand his emotions.

- notes expression of 'positive opinions', and links this to use of COOL in particular social groups
- confused discussion of complication/complexity
- but recovers again to write a conclusion which attempts to summarise the dynamics

Overall, this is an answer with *some developed discussion*, but inconsistent in focus and accuracy. At times, discussion of the dynamics is more in terms of the personalities and their interactions than in terms of linguistic features.

Arla leaves the transcript in Line 18. However she uses her language to warn and encourage Leegan as she's does the task. "This one is quite a complicated one". This is very complex compared to the rest of the transcript. We can see this i s the case in Leegan chooses to follow Talen much simpler instruction of 'make it into a circle'.

It seems to me that Arla has a 'complicated' here instructions Arla realised Talen ce work were effectively. I feel it is for this refuses she offers to do the next part of the task. 'I'll carry on with this' Thus show that she feels she is more capable at completing the task then both Talen and Leegan.

Overall the language they use helps to portray feeling and to help each other. It may be subconscious to them but without these simple features it may become confusing to both the competeters and the audience.