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Examiners' report

ENGLISH LANGUAGE

H070

For first teaching in 2015

H070/01 Summer 2023 series

Contents

Introduction

Our examiners' reports are produced to offer constructive feedback on candidates' performance in the examinations. They provide useful guidance for future candidates.

The reports will include a general commentary on candidates' performance, identify technical aspects examined in the questions and highlight good performance and where performance could be improved. A selection of candidate answers are also provided. The reports will also explain aspects which caused difficulty and why the difficulties arose, whether through a lack of knowledge, poor examination technique, or any other identifiable and explainable reason.

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Paper 1 series overview

H070/01 is one of two examination units for the AS Level examination for GCE English Language. This component requires candidates to apply their knowledge of linguistic terms, context and theory to unseen texts firstly as a single text analysis, and then a comparison. To do well on this paper, candidates need to be comfortable applying their knowledge and understanding to unseen texts.

The paper was accessible and appropriate for the range of candidates' abilities and the majority of candidates were able to access the texts without any significant difficulties. Scripts were submitted from the bottom of Level 2 right up to the top of Level 6.

Candidates appeared to use their time effectively on this paper; there was little evidence of candidates running out of time. Many responses provided evidence of effective time management, suggesting that candidates are spending more time analysing the texts and planning their response, which generally leads to more analytical responses.

The questions were data-driven and the questions were clear and specific. Question 1 was focused on analysing a single text and Question 2 was focused on comparing two different texts. Some candidates did not focus on what the question specified, writing generally about graphology and phonology which, unless directly and effectively linked to lexis or grammar, went unrewarded.

Candidates generally used linguistic terminology accurately, although there was some confusion between downtoners, intensifiers and types of adverb. Many candidates attempted to analyse 'patterns' to get into the higher bands but not all candidates did this effectively, with many not explaining why the pattern was used or analysing the impact.

Candidates who did well on this paper generally:	Candidates who did less well on this paper generally:
- used terminology accurately - analysed the purpose and effect of patterns within texts - made perceptive links to context - gave equal weighting to both texts in Question 2.	- labelled features incorrectly - offered over-generalised conclusions about audience and purpose - offered simplistic judgements about context - made general points not explicitly linked to linguistic evidence - did not support responses with examples from the text - were narrow in their consideration of features.

Question 1

Understanding language features in context

Read **Text A** in the **Resource Booklet** and answer the question.

1   Giving careful consideration to the context of the text, identify and analyse features taken from different language levels. **[24]**

Text A is from the online version of Which? magazine that provides guidance on making purchases. The article was published in 2019.

All candidates understood the purpose and audience of the Which? magazine text which seemed to be accessible to candidates at all achievement levels.

Many candidates understood the purpose of the text, its intended audience and how it aimed to formulate a synthetic relationship with the audience. In considering the construction of this relationship, centres are reminded to encourage candidates to insert their conceptual knowledge with a light touch – less successful responses often overstate learned knowledge such as Fairclough's theories at the expense of retaining precise focus on data analysis.

Candidates wrote at length about the conventions of the genre, with high-level responses understanding the nuisances of the genre and lower-level responses tending to apply a formulaic or checklist approach to what constitutes an effective website, which was not helpful.

In terms of lexis, high-level responses successfully identified patterns and semantic fields while linking such features effectively to context. Successful responses linked the persuasive techniques employed in the text to types of power. Successful responses also ensured they analysed word classes in detail such as types of adverb, verb, noun and adjective. Most students confidently analysed adjectives, nouns, pronouns, register, jargon, high frequency lexis and low frequency lexis and linked them to context, while some weaker responses tended to describe basic features such as monosyllabic/polysyllabic lexis, colloquialisms and hyperbole without linking them to context. Less successful responses described a 'semantic field of fraud' or a 'semantic field of negative lexis' with little or no exemplification or link to context. Weaker responses identified linguistic features and provided no exemplification.

In terms of syntax, higher-level responses effectively analysed the impact of syntactical variation in terms of sentence types and word classes in detail, with some analysing sentence function in terms of form and function, e.g. indirect imperatives. Many responses successfully analysed conditionals but weaker responses tended to describe sentences with no links to context.

It has been said before in examiner reports for this component that the best responses to this task always seek to work from the text outwards, rather than fitting the text to pre-learned knowledge or frameworks. It was impressive to see the range which some students covered, when they only had around thirty minutes to write their response. Many responses considered a number of language levels, and found valid and often interesting comments to make.

Exemplar 1

Section A

The context of this text is that it is created by a magazine that specialises in writing articles for people who need help to choose a holiday here. In this way, the magazine has a very narrow focus and so each article should be written by journalists who are very educated on the subject. The purpose of a text such as this being written, is to generate more views on the magazines online site, aimed at an audience who potentially would not normally read that magazine. Because the title answers a very specific question, the article is clearly aimed only at those looking for its answer, ~~after this detail essay~~. The magazine needs views on its online site in order to make money, and this is why various other links are added throughout the text, including those that answer specific questions - tailored to the target audience who may not know much about holiday bookings, and a general link back to the main site. As the website was published in 2019, before the covid pandemic, this was while travelling was still very common, and use of the site AirBnB was increasing. This site is mentioned a few times in the extract, perhaps as it is a fairly new site that people may have questions about, and so makes the text appeal to a wider audience of people.

The Discourse structure of the text is laid out in a list format, with a short introduction before a list of headings with information on the topic. The breakdown of the text into simple points makes the article very accessible and easy to read, which may be useful as if the audience is those new to online holiday bookings, they may not be well experienced at using technology. The title and its description clearly tells how the article will be laid out ~~novercampstennovice~~ 'take a look at our top tips', this assures the reader that the structure of the article will be in a list based format, rather than something more difficult to understand, so encourages them to keep reading. The addition of a paragraph that details the dangers of fake holiday listings before the rest of the article contributes to persuading the audience of the importance of reading the article by implying they could loose money without the information provided.

On a sentence level, the ~~lengths~~ length varies. Some sentences are very short, so as to emphasize a 'certain point such as 'this is a dead giveaway' or 'they probably are!' The use of these short, declarative sentences ~~act~~ imply a ~~level~~ high level of certainty behind what the article states, reassuring the reader to believe what they see written as

the author knows what they are talking about. Within the sentences there are also many imperatives such as 'Do't click on Sainsbab.com...' that reiterate the idea that the magazine is well informed enough to give clear instructions so the reader should to trust them and continue to read. Finally, rhetorical questions are used 'Want to know what companies you can trust?' this forces the reader to consider pro it they want to click on the next link by being asked about themselves making them more likely to do so than if the link has just posted in. Rhetorical questions are also used in order to question the readers choices 'if you're unsure, why take the risk?' this causes the reader to doubt their decisions and implies that the author of the magazine is more logical and knowledgeable as it happens to catch the reader only once more creating an image of the magazine as trustworthy.

Different features are used at word level in order to keep the reader engaged such as using statistics and the stats of a government agency in order to scare readers into believing that reading the article is necessary. This can be seen where it reads 'police statistics' and quotes figures such as '£6.7m in 2014'. This also implies that the author of the text is very knowledgeable on the topic. The use of

the word 'victims' in order to describe those who had been conned, is emotive, dramatic language that further implies that holiday booking fraud is very serious and dangerous, so the article must be read. Colloquial words are used throughout in order to make the language accessible to any reader, and used the such as 'fraudsters' and 'scammers'. The article in the same way avoids field specific lexis and instead simplifies the language that makes the potential audience of the article large, as it can be read by anyone. The use of the pronoun 'we' throughout the article to describe the author of the text implies that this article was written by a whole team of people, who potentially looked into this matter, 'we've seen several imitation Airbnb websites'. It also makes the text appear to be written by them to reflect the magazine as a whole, with all of its knowledge, rather than by just one writer, which increases the audiences trust in what it says. The text lacks adjectives or thoughts, and this is due to the the purpose being to inform rather than to engage, with the sentences mostly revolving around imperatives that simple imperatives so are mostly verbs and nouns.

The text uses multimodality in order to make the text even simpler to read. The use of a bold text for titles makes like the structure of the article

Very clear, for the audience to understand, the
embolished nature of the paragraph on the dogus
of travel further emphasise how important the article is.
This contributes in both reassuring the readers that
the article is easy to read, and that it is necessary

This is a good Level 5 response. The opening is strong and insightful and identifies the main contexts of the text, focusing on the context of production, genre, audience and purpose. However, a Level 6 response might have expanded on this and explored how the text was affected by primary audience, primary purpose, secondary audience and secondary purpose.

The response is effective because it is well-structured and provides a systematic analysis, rather than a basic line-by-line approach which would be a lower-level response. The answer identifies and acknowledges the typical discourse structure of this text type and links it effectively to adjacency pairs, which is a typical speech feature but highlights that the candidate is aware of the mixed mode genre of the website. The candidate exemplifies points and embeds quotes with skill and precision. What is also strong is how the candidate consistently and effectively links language to context as evidenced at the end of the paragraphs.

After structure, the candidate then focuses on grammar, with points on the impact of declaratives and interrogatives while skilfully linking such features to contexts such as implied meanings.

After sentences, the candidate focuses on lexis and makes precise and insightful analysis of the impact of colloquialisms, jargon and pronouns. All points are exemplified and linked to context.

The response is well-structured, effectively communicated and covers a range of language points in a systematic manner. Labelling of terminology is accurate.

This response achieved marks in Level 5 for both AO1 and AO3. AO1 was at the bottom of Level 5 as in some cases labelling is not precise, e.g., referring to 'the word' rather than the actual word class.

Question 2

Comparing and contrasting texts

2   Using appropriate linguistic concepts and methods, analyse the ways in which language is used in these two texts. In your answer you should:

- explore connections and variations between the texts

- consider how contextual factors contribute to the construction of meaning.   **[36]**

Both texts addressed the issue of home schooling. Text B is a transcript of part of the discussion show *Loose Women* and C is an article from *The Guardian*. Most candidates understood the differences between the two, obviously in terms of genre, but also regarding audience, purpose and point of view.

Successful responses provided a balance between similarities and differences and went beyond the literal, in that they compared context and language by providing examples from the text. Successful responses were able to compare and contrast how the issue of home schooling was represented without getting drawn into the politics of the topic.

Successful responses were able to compare the obvious speech versus writing difference between the texts by focusing on aspects of speech and conversation in Text B then comparing such features to the conventional written features of Text C. However, more successful responses were able to link such factors to audience, purpose and elements of planning, rather than comparing context individually.

Successful responses based their comparison on the language levels of pragmatics, lexis/semantics, grammar/syntax, and least successfully of all, phonology. Many candidates wrote about patterns, with the most successful able to exemplify across the text and analyse the intended purpose and impact of such patterns, whereas less successful responses would simply describe a pattern and provide little or no analysis or exemplification.

Successful responses analysed the concepts of power in a concise way, linked directly to the texts. Some candidates analysed persuasion in relation to the Aristotelian concepts of logos, ethos and pathos but with mixed success, as such features are more logically related to monologue rather than dialogue.

Weaker responses provided basic literal comparisons with few exemplifications or links to context. Weaker responses tended to describe more than analyse the language features and offered a formulaic, basic comparison.

Many candidates wrote about the Gricean Maxims and most of the time this did not illuminate the text as its application could be basic, descriptive and formulaic. Candidates attempting to apply gender theory did so with mixed success with more successful responses using the theory to illuminate and analyse the data rather than the simply adding it as a token comment at the end.

These examiner reports have previously highlighted the most successful approaches to this challenging comparative task. Candidates who track discourse – comparing beginning, middle and end – often achieve balanced coverage of both texts. As for Question 1, the formulaic listing of language levels is as unhelpful for Question 2 as it is for Question 1, particularly as this generates an approach that merely identifies what one text has which the other lacks. Insightful comparisons are often generated by highlighting a shared contextual factor – such as the audience's engagement with the news, for example – and then considering how the specific linguistic features in the text manipulate, construct or impact, that engagement.

Exemplar 2

correction / gave start of "how old are they're & they're" this self correction is typical in conversation. Contrasting this is Text C which is a written and therefore planned piece of text which can be more controversial controversial as she isn't in the public eye. It's an article from the Guardian which is a broadsheet, left wing newspaper. They are typically a more informal newspaper and include frequent articles similar to this therefore the target audience would expect articles similar in every paper. It has strong opinion toward homeschooling which are all positive. This could create guilt for parents who have to go to work and are unable to homeschool their children as they may feel as if they have to agree with this article due to its bossy and imperitive tone. The purpose is to persuade which is done through synthetic personalisation "you can work around any work rotas (shifts)" suggesting that there shouldn't be any excuse to not homeschooling

their children which is an unrealistic
expectation. Pub public school
in a negative light which in
most circumstances isn't the case
as it has many benifits. Suggests
a left wing opinion on the
education system.

Text B is featured in a daytime
programme meaning before the
9pm watershed. Contextually,
this means that they cannot share
any offensive opinions or use
any tabboo lexis / swearing.
Loose women is a colloquial
chat show so they discuss these
topics purely based on opinion
and not facts. & Christine Lampard
calls stacey solomen "stacey"
this is a term of address suggesting
there is little social distance
between them. Gerard Van Herk
would suggest they are
unintentionally converging with
eachother in order to appear more
friendly and likeable and reduce
the social distance. This is
successful as the audience will
be entertained by their colloquial

conversation which fulfils the purpose of the episode. However, text C is a more structured text creating the opposite effect with the producer and the audience as they diverge ~~th~~ from eachother due to the unstructured nature of the text therefore the social distance is larger. This is typical of a written ~~text~~ as the audience is broader and unknown meaning anyone could read this article. There is an attempt to reduce this slightly as it is a multimodal text meaning the image is less serious and is meant to guide the audience into imagine what it would be like to homeschool their children. Propp's Narrative Heory suggests the parents would then be the heros for their children as they help massively with their education.

Text B is less formal as it has vague language "I think this is the growth of the top" and Contractions "they're" "wasn't" and "it's" as it is a transcript exactly what they said is written

meaning this is how the celebrities speak. More friendly accents often have less solidarity meaning these celebrities appear as friendly and relatable as opposed to serious and intelligent which would be show through RP and standard English. Text C is written entirely in standard english making it appear as less friendly but also has more solidarity and would be more likely to be taken seriously. Includes contractions like "don't" and "it's" showing an attempt to appear more friendly and therefore convincing. There is some polysyllabic lexis throughout such as "education is often mentioned" but for the most part is Monosyllabic Anglo Saxon reinforcing that there is an attempt to converge with the target audience who are most likely parents who have thought of homeschooling their children. Contextually, this text is modern as was published in 2016 meaning that homeschooling was becoming

more popular. It never used to be a thing but recently has become more popular which could be due to people on social media advising that home schooling is better. Parents may have seen their favourite celebrities home school their children therefore view it as the right thing to do. Home schooling your children may be an example of overt prestige as it is less common in society. Van Herk suggests covert prestige is a more common concept in society therefore overt is seen less therefore meaning its only accepted by certain social contexts. Which is probably more modern audiences who frequently follow trends.

This is a strong, systematically-approached response which sits in Level 5 for all AOs: top of the Level for AO1 and AO3, and bottom of the Level for AO4.

The opening of the essay is effective, with a direct comparison of key contexts such as genre, topic, purpose and audience. It could have been improved by developing the audience comparison and, for both audience and purpose, comparing secondary and primary.

The comparisons are systematic and focused on language methods.

The first comparison is of discourse which is logical due to the texts. The analysis is detailed with plenty of exemplification and relevant links to context, which could have been developed but it is, none the less, firmly in Level 5. The analysis of features of speech could be developed and the sections on Grice, and Brown and Levison are not fully developed.

The essay goes on to compare lexical features including word classes and register, and as in the previous framework, it is detailed and precise, and linguistic terminology is accurately applied.

The comparisons are strong but a more detailed analysis of concepts would have pushed it into Level 6. The links made are conceptual and there is strong understanding of context in relation to linguistic patterns.

Exemplar 3

Text B is a transcript from an episode of 'Loose Women', therefore we see a range of non-fluency features such as pauses. Text C is from an article in 'The Guardian', so we see examples of polysyllabic lexis. Both texts discuss different and similar views on home-schooling.

Due to the mode of Text B, being a transcript, we see many non-fluency features, common in spoken language, for example, the continuous overlapping displayed, first exampled at the beginning of the transcript, when Stacy Solomon overlaps Christine Lampard with "eleven (.) and seven." This demonstrates how their is immediate hostility between Solomon and Lampard, displaying Brown and Levinson's theory of Face Threatening Acts. We also see more conflict in the text, but this time between Solomon and Janet Street-Porter. Contractions are typical in speech, so when Stacy says 'I am aware of that' there are some connotations of aggression. The two go on to overlap eachother which could suggest they are both attempting to hold the conversational floor, This is ultimately held by Janet, which may demonstrate Wareing's theory of personal power. In contrast to

this, in Text C, we see no conflict as it is an article, written by a singular person. The article's main purpose is to discuss the reasons fore home-schooling children, not to have a debate about the topic, as shown in Text B. There are a range of features common to an article, such as polysyllabic lexis, 'financial implication' which may be Barbieri's attempt to keep a level of formality, due to the article being published in 'The Guardian'. Barbieri may also be converging with the audience, as they are assumably from a high-educated background. Despite this, there are examples of venacular literacy practices, such as intensifiers, 'so', and more colloquial lexis 'shifts', ~~this~~ as these features imitate spoken language. This links to fairclough's theory of synthetic personalisation, as by using these features it creates likeability into the text.

Text B, provides examples of unequal exchanges, such as when Solomon overlaps and continues talking over Lampard. There is also backchanneling shown as the audience applauses Janet-Street Porter. This is indicative of how Solomen has

the controversial opinions and is less likeable. The applause from the audience connotes how Porter has the right views and opinions, making the audience subconsciously agree with her; ~~creat~~ hightighting Althusser's theory of interpellation. However, in text C there is no signs of this due to the mode being an article. There is repeated use of direct adress shown by the second-person pronoun `you' which reduces social distance within the text. There is also humour shown `with glee or a dread', Not only does the humour make this article enjoyable, the relatability does as the audience would primarily be parents, therefore prompting the audience to read on ~~that to also persuade to~~ and to also value her opinions, rather than just disagree with her.

This is from a mid-level response with all AO1 and AO4 in Level 4 and AO3 in Level 3. The level of comparison lacks detail and is not developed, particularly in relation to context.

Compared with Exemplar 2, the opening paragraph is rather basic and fails to address the key contexts of the texts and is essentially pointing out what is obvious.

The first comparison is centred around mode and there are some convincing and accurate comparisons between features of speech and writing such as overlapping, colloquialisms, register, pronoun use and the concepts of face, synthetic personalisation and power.

The comparisons are somewhat limited in that they only essentially focus on speech versus writing. The candidate does compare some contexts, albeit in an inconsistent and not fully developed way.

The candidate shows awareness of concepts and linguistic labelling is accurate. It is the narrowness and lack of development which keep this mid-level.

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