

Exemplar Candidate Work

GCE English Language

OCR GCE in English Language: H469

Unit: F651 Question 1

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

GCE English Language

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 2:

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 1: Candidate answer	Examiner's commentary
<p>1) The transcription is a conversation between three young girls role-playing. Fay is the presenter,, we know this because she asks questions to the other. Fay is 13, the oldest of the group, this maybe the reason why she is presenting The children have obviously listened to a radio show before as they are able to use correct occupational dialogue such as 'and so on the line with us', and they are able to use prosodic features to stress different parts of the sentence for example Fay says 'your mum puts all you thing in the bin' The intonation on the word bin allows Lisa to see that it was an intended question and not a statement.</p> <p>Fay also uses words such as 'darling' and 'sweetheart' to talk to her 'listeners'. She has heard this on the radio before and is imitating the way adults sometimes speak to each other.</p> <p>The children follow the conversational rules well Turn-taking is present, with very little overlapping. This has also been imitated from the radio. The listeners know that they have to listen to the presenter and answer when questioned.</p> <p>Jenny says very little during the transcript, this may be because she is younger and the other girls are talking over. She should have an almost fully developed vocabulary, but only seems to say yes. Fay deals with Jenny in a motherly way; she talks to her as if she is either her teacher or parent, helping her understand what is going on. Fay asks leading questions to get Jenny to contribute such as 'we know that don't we Jenny, do you leave things on the floor'. This sort of language is often present in children's TV programmes, which encourage children to interact and join with the activity. The questions help them think what should be said so that they understand.</p> <p>There is no evidence of an accent in the transcript, with the children speaking in standard English. There are a fair amount of non-fluency features. With many fillers such as 'erm' being used. These show that the girls are role-playing and copying what they have hard on the radio.</p> <p>The transcript progresses into childish conversation towards</p>	<p>Q1) This is a very competent script, which offers <i>developed discussion of concepts and issues</i> and <i>competent analysis and evaluation</i>. A high Band 4, rather than Band 5, mark overall reflects an approach which is more often descriptive than analytical.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • succinct and focused opening • notes the children's <i>roles</i> • links to their ages • notes <i>occupational dialogue</i> (error for <i>dialect</i>?) • notes <i>prosodic stress</i>, and explains that it denotes question intonation • notes terms of address, gives examples and suggest this ("darling ... sweetheart") is how adults talk to children • comments on 'conversational rules', and mentions turn-taking and overlapping • comments on how Jenny says very little, and suggests 'she should have an almost fully developed vocabulary' • notes that Fay treats her in a 'motherly' way, and asks leading questions • able to support this with reference to the transcript, but NOT able to analyse the linguistic features ('this sort of language') • comments that there are no signs of accent • notes <i>non-fluency features</i> • notes 'childish conversation', and how Fay 'comes out of role' to join in this • notes scarcity of para-linguistic features • quite lengthy conclusion, summarising how the role-play has worked <p>Overall, this is fluent discussion, ably tracing the dynamics of interaction. However, it tends to be (accurately) <i>descriptive</i> rather than <i>analytical</i> of language: the candidate is inclined to explain in terms of how this is typical of radio phone-in rather than to analyse (for example) turn-taking, length of utterance, use of tag questions, repairs / back-tracking / re-formulation.</p>

the end. When the children are shocked by the idea of Lisa's mum putting her 'Sylvanian family caravan in the bin' Fay comes slightly out of role, shouting 'NO WAY' to show this shock. She then regains her status as presenter and rounds off the show.

Lexically, the role play is very successful Lisa and Fay are able to use their words to show who is who in the conversation.

There are very few paralinguistic features shown other than laughing Jenny laughs after she answers Fay question, which may be due to her feeling slightly inferior to the other girls due to her age.

Overall the way the children use language to carry out their role play task is very successful. They are able to use correct terminology and do so when appropriate. They make the role play very much their own by talking about the 'Sylvanian Family Caravan', making the dialogue more child-like. The roles they are playing are also very clear.

The children work together to make the role play successful, helping each other keep the conversation going. They are old enough to be able to understand the difference in the way they are speaking because it a radio show. Fay knows she has to speak the way she is because it makes her sound superior to the other two because she is leading the show.

Candidate 5:

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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 1: Candidate answer	Examiner's commentary
<p>1) In this transcript, three girls aged 13, 9 and 7 are role-playing a radio talk show. The topic of conversation is ways to keep your room tidy. The register is informal as it suited to the task, and the girls use language in several ways to keep the ‘radio show’ moving forward.</p> <p>First, Fay who is 13 and is role-playing the host of the show, uses many language features to encourage the two younger girls and to keep the flow of conversation.</p> <p>For example, she asks lots of questions: ‘hello Lisa are you there sweetheart’ and ‘do you want to tell her’. These questions encourage Lisa 9 and Jenny 7 to speak. Questions are a common feature of language when an older person is speaking to a younger one it helps the younger children to understand the rules of adult conversation. Including turn-taking and adhering to H.P Grice maxim of quantity. Although Lisa has a reasonably form grasp of the rules of conversation, Jenny at age 7 is still learning a few of the finer points. Another role which questions play in conversation is t let listeners know that the current speaker’s turn has come to an end. This is especially relevant in considering that the children here are role-playing a radio show. The speakers could not see each</p>	<p>Q1) This is a fluent and detailed script, one which makes the most of available knowledge and achieves a mark in the top Band. Terminology (AO1) is used throughout as an organising device, and the focus of the question is always kept clearly in view. Each point is supported by apt and accurate reference to textual detail, and developed and/or explained clearly. Secure knowledge of linguistic theories and concepts informs the answers thoroughly.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• succinct opening summary of topic and participants, and register / mode / form• identifies Fay as presenter; notes her function as asking questions in order to encourage the others• extrapolates to general features of child-adult interaction; integrates understanding of Grice’s maxims and turn-taking• shows sophisticated grasp of dynamics of radio-show interaction, e.g. use of <i>tag questions</i> to signal that a turn has come to an end, because the participants can’t see each other• notes use of simple, field-specific lexis• identifies Fay’s use of <i>terms of endearment</i> and links this to discussion of relative power/status• discusses <i>downward convergence</i>; shows understanding of

other and so tag questions like 'haven't you darling' are especially important.

Another way in which the three girls use language to complete their role-play is the use of simple and easy-to-understand lexis. As Jenny is 7, Lisa is 9 and Fay is 13, they have no need for complex lexical terms. Instead they use lexis that any 7 year old would understand, such as 'rubbish'. Much of the lexis also is field-specific to tidying up: 'tidying up' 'rubbish' and 'bin', or specific to young girls at home: 'sylvanian family caravan' and 'mum'. Another interesting lexical feature to note is Fay's use of terms of endearment. She refers to the other girls as 'sweetheart' and 'darling' the host of the show. These terms of endearment show how language can demonstrate the relative power of the speakers, even among younger children - it is unlikely that Jenny, the youngest, would refer to Fay as 'darling'.

Along with the relatively simple lexis, in accordance with accommodation theory, Fay is using downward convergence to bring her style of speaking closer to that of the two younger girls. At age 13, she is capable of using more complex sentence structures and vocabulary than the two younger girls. In order to facilitate the role-play, however, she has used simpler sentences and lexis for example, she says 'your mum puts al your thing in the bin' and 'so Jenny do you think that's a helpful idea'. Both examples are clear, making use of simple surtax and lexis to help the two younger girls.

In the case of 'so Jenny you think that's helpful that's a helpful idea'. Fay has used a repair to further clarify her point for Jenny. This is another way to help facilitate the role-play. Repairs in language clarify something said previously. Another instance of this is when Fay asks Lisa to tell Jenny her advice, and says, '(.) erm she's listening on the other line@. Lisa replies 'ohh [laughs] so it is clear that without this repair, Lisa might have been confused. Repairs facilitate the role-playing here by making sure all the participants understand what is going on.

Also, back-channel language also helps to facilitate the role-playing task. While Lisa is giving Jenny her advice on how to

accommodation theory

- good examples, but limited analysis of the lexical / syntactical features
- notes *repairs*, and gives developed explanation of their function
- comments on back-channelling
- fluent, developed, whole-page discussion of Grice's Maxims accurate and very clear in explanation, but not analytical of language

Overall, this is an answer with *well-developed and consistently detailed discussion*. Skilful integration of relevant theory lifts it into Band 6.

keep a tidy room, both Jenny and Fay offer back-channels to ensure Lisa that they are listening. Examples are 'yes' and 'REALLY'

As they are role-playing a radio show and would not be able to see each other if it were a real radio show, back-channels are especially important. They could not see other signs that the listener was listening, such as eye contact.

Another way in which language is used here to carry out the task is by adhering to H.P Grice's four maxims of quantity, quality, relevance and manner. These are important for young children to learn as they ensure that the conversation is high-quality. None of the speakers talk to much, considering their roles in the conversation. Fay speaks frequently, but this makes sense and adheres to the maxim because she is playing the host and must facilitate the conversation. Lisa also speaks quite a lot, but she too can still be said to be adhering to the maxim because she is the one who has called in to share advice. Jenny speaks the least, but she is just listening to the advice. Also, at age 7, she would still be learning some of the rules of adult conversation. None of the speakers are lying, thus adhering to the maxim of quality. The topic remained on the subject of how to keep the bedroom tidy, adhering to the maxim of relevance. This is especially important because in a real radio show with people calling in, air time would be limited and so the topic would need to be firmly adhered to. Finally, manner is mostly adhered to with the exception of one interruption near the end: 'she might do// and'. This is natural, however, considering that they are role-playing a radio show and would not be able to pick up on nonverbal communication cues because they could not see the other people.

Overall, language is used in many ways by these children in order to carry out their role-play of a radio talk -show. Lexis, syntax and other features all play an important role.

Candidate 6:

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Question 1: Candidate answer

1) This transcript involves three speakers. They are role playing a radio phone in programme. The transcripts mode is spoken and it is an informal register.

Fay opens the role play by introducing the caller Lucy, Fay uses the lexical term ‘sweetheart’ possibly in attempt to perform divergence showing the social distance between them both. Fay uses a received pronunciation dialect of standard English. Lisa is calling to give Jenny referential advice about her problem with tidying her room. Due to the spontaneity of spoken discourse on line 4 of the transcript Fay uses the filler ‘erm’, as thinking space for what she was going to say next. Fay digresses to introduce the advised topic. The topic introduced is suitable and appropriate considering the children’s age. It is also suitable for the audience that the role playing is aimed at. At the end of line 5 Fay again diverges referring to Lisa as ‘darling’ in this line Fay also uses the tag/question ‘haven’t you’ almost forcing Lisa to give a reply. As the transcript continues Lisa fails to turn take effectively with Fay and flouts Grices Maxims of quantity and relevance. Lisa seems almost confused about what it is she is being asked to do, possibly due to

Examiner's commentary

Q1) The complete absence of paragraphing in the first answer is not of itself fatally undermining, but there is a general lack of clarity and/or development, which limits the achievement. On balance, the script is borderline Band 3 / 4.

- brief opening: notes mode and register
- immediate focus on how lexical choice (*sweetheart*) establishes dynamics in terms of status – a potentially complex argument which is not quite developed or clarified
- asserts RP ‘dialect’ and standard English
- notes referential function and ‘spontaneity’
- notes fillers and digression
- sustained focus on mode / role-play
- notes tag questions and turn-taking, and introduces Grice’s maxims
- traces the dynamics utterance by utterance
- notes/identifies virtually every linguistic feature BUT doesn’t analyse
- discusses how adjacency pairs promote confidence and reassurance
- analyses example of repair / topic loop / re-phrasing
- sudden shift to a conclusion; then links back to Grice’s and Skinner’s theories

Overall, this is an answer with considerable knowledge (AO3) of key

nerves and shyness. When Lisa finally goes to give her advice she starts by suing the filler 'well' as thinking space repeating it twice. On line 13 Lisa uses the lexical term 'rubbish' to describe the items on her bedroom floor have been treated. This lexical choice shows the informality of the conversation. It is also a word used as slang among THE YOUNGER GENERATION. Again Lisa uses the filler 'erm' and then seeks reassurance by using the expression 'you know'. This pulls Fay back into the conversation, giving Lisa the reassurance that she is understood. On line 16 Fay brings Jenny into the conversation asking the tag question 'do you leave things on the floor', this is also an example on an adjacency pair. This reassurance gives Lisa the confidence to continue. Line 18, Lisa repairs 'if you leave things' replacing it with 'if you treat things'. This repair does a topic loop back to line 14 where Lisa attempts to explain the terminology she uses, rephrasing it so that all participants understand her. Fay get Lisa to digress further. Occasionally, according to the communication model Fay incorrectly encoded. To conclude the children in this transcript use language to carry out their role play task effectively. Fay doesn't fail to reinforce the fact they are role playing a radio phone-in programme by suing the word 'line' in reference to the shows call line. All of the children manage to cooperate effectively in this transcript too, rarely flouting Grices maxims. Skinner's theory of reinforcement is also shown by Lisa when she states what her mum tells her lines 13 Through negative reinforcement Lisa has learnt not to treat her things like 'rubbish'.

constituents of language. However, it's poorly organised (AO1) and points often lack development. On balance, it falls short of Band 5 but has enough strengths for Band 4.