



Pearson

Examiners' Report

Principal Examiner Feedback

January 2018

Pearson Edexcel IAL
In English Language (WEN04_01_1801_ER)
Unit 4: Investigating Language

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January 2018

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Introduction

The purpose of this report is to provide centres with an overview of the performance of this paper. This was the second sitting of WEN04 for IAL English Language and only had a small entry.

This paper offers a choice of four topic areas focusing on global language, child language, language and power and language and technology. The pre-release material was available to centres via the Pearson website in September 2017, enabling candidates time to research their chosen sub topic in preparation for the exam on 23rd January.

The sub-topics for the January series were:

1. Indian English
2. writing frames
3. financial institutions
4. public address systems.

The paper addresses four of the Assessment Objectives: AO1, AO2, AO3 and AO4. All candidates appeared to be able to manage their time effectively across the paper ensuring that they answered both questions fully. Section A (questions 1 – 4) is marked out of 20 and Section B (questions 5 – 8) is marked out of 30. The time spent and length of response for Section B should be longer than Section A as reflected in a higher number of marks and the requirement to include research completed by the candidate within their response.

Only three of the four topic areas were chosen in this series with child language being the most popular and Indian English and the language of financial institutions second and third in popularity. The language of technology was not attempted by any candidate. A range of responses were seen across the three topics, a number of which were extremely well written and warranted marks within a level 5. The paper appeared to have performed well with no queries raised by centres.

Section A.

In Q1, the candidates were asked to analyse a transcript of an interview between an Indian actor and the host of a television show. Candidates were required to focus on language frameworks, the context behind the interview and to introduce relevant theories and concepts to explore the language of Indian speakers of English.

Candidates achieving marks at the lower levels for Q1 generally resorted to a descriptive approach when exploring the transcript and the examples that were selected were unassimilated and at times paraphrased. *'the speakers are talking about superheroes and use the names of the characters'*. Terminology was infrequently or incorrectly applied to the data and when used, was purely for feature-spotting purposes. There was also a lack of references made to phonology and pronunciation and a couple of responses discussed how the transcript lacked punctuation. It is recommended that centres cover the rubric of transcript writing with their students in preparation for the summer series.

Despite the limited number of responses for Q1, the overall quality at the top end was good, with a couple of candidates achieving marks within a level 4. Engagement with the data was sustained, with the use of appropriate register, style and accurate terminology. It appears that centres had taken note of the PE comments from the summer 2017 series when preparing their students for this exam as more candidates had used the language framework appropriately when analysing the data in Q1. To maintain

responses at an A grade, there would need to be very few if any lapses in clarity and transitioning between points made and close exemplification and scrutiny of a wide range of data would be expected. There were occasions when candidates discussing phonology slipped into identifying features rather than exploring how they reflected English spoken in India.

Example response – mark awarded 15/20

Text A is an interview between an Indian actor called Shah Rukh Khan and the NDTV journalist Barkha Dutt. The context of this interview is based on a new film which is about to be released known as 'Ra.One'. Meanwhile, both individuals talk about the Superheroes which they were prone to as ^{the} a younger generation and how different they were to Superman or Spiderman. There are many features between this text which show evidence of Indian English.

Firstly, the ^{morphology} ~~phonology~~ of this text highly matches with that of Indian English. Many discourse markers have been used by both speakers in order to give them time to think of how to structure a sentence. For example the phrase 'you know it seem' and the phrase 'so actually when' have two discourse markers which are 'you know' and 'so'. These allow ~~Shah~~ speakers with the Indian dialects to translate their ideas from the dialects to English. Furthermore, many micropauses have been used

to converse; taking this phrase for example "I mean yeah(.) if you believe Hindi cinema(.) they don't...."

These micropauses are once again used to give speakers time to generate sentences in English.

In addition, Indian English often lack the use of articles 'the', ^{and} 'a', 'an'. The first question from Barkha Dutt is lacking the article 'the' in the quote 'Shah Rukh ~~than~~ you have been taking as er Ra One'. There should be a 'the' after the word 'as'.

Another example includes the omission of the word 'of' in the phrase 'because Bengali Tiger', where the 'of' should have been included after the word 'because' in Standard English.

Moving on, from morphology, the syntax of this interview will be analysed. Firstly, it should be noted that many word fillers exist in the interview, again the reason is due to English not being the original language / mother tongue of both speakers, therefore they have to think how to answer the question first. Examples of word fillers used include 'em, er'. Another feature of Indian English in terms of syntax is the use of many words starting with

the letter 'w' within a sentence. For instance 'what I want ... why is that ... why is that we don't ...'. There are some instances in which excess words have been used which is common to Indian English, for instance ~~not~~ Shah Rukh Khan could have used 'don't' 'we don't want' instead of stating 'not wanting'. This is typical use of progressive tense which Indian English often does by adding the morpheme, 'ing' to 'want'. The reason behind this is that in Hindi and many other Indian dialects there is only one tense and not many tenses like in English.

Next, the lexis of the interview will be analysed. Firstly, there quite a few ~~Hindi~~ Indian words that have been included in this conversation including 'Hindi, Raven, Bahadur, Hanuman'. This is because both speakers are from India and are more prone to use these words. Another thing which was noticed was that the word 'shot' has replaced the word 'recording'; 'like a regular shot'. These are coinages that are used in ~~for~~ Indian English. There is a lot of exaggeration and hyperbole.

used including 'big', which is common in the Indian culture to exaggerate items and instead of using the adjective 'famous' Shah Rukh Khan had used 'big'.

Finally, the phonology of this text will be assessed. By looking at this text it can be seen that the consonant /h/ is avoided in words such as 'mythology' and 'that'. Next the phoneme /t/ is not being pronounced in this Indian English dialect, for example the word 'but' which has the phoneme '/bʌd/'. Also the word 'bottle' is inclusive for this explanation where the /t/ is not used. There is also a deletion of the phoneme /g/ in words such as 'wanting' in Indian English /wɒntɪŋ/. The 'a' is also not dragged as in Standard English.

In conclusion, this dialogue has many connections with Indian English. Nevertheless, since this is an interview with an internationally famous actor there are signs that better than the English used is closer to standard English than the local people.

The response shows a sustained and secure understanding of the language within the transcript and how the speakers present various characteristics of Indian English. Terminology is accurate and well-integrated: 'phonetic', 'micropauses', 'morphology'. The candidate evaluates the construction of meaning within the data and supports points with a range of examples. Similarities and differences between the two speakers are discussed and the candidate poses their own opinion.

In Q2, candidates were required to analyse two writing frames completed by a 7-year-old child at school. The purpose of the writing frames was to aid the student in planning and then reflecting on making a fruit smoothie. The two frames were completed a day apart. Candidates answering Q2 were expected to use the language framework to consider the features of the two writing frames; the methods and language used by the child in their completion and the way the frames allowed interactions with the teacher. The candidate was expected to underpin their response with contextual, theoretical and conceptual discussion.

Weaker responses for Q2 tended to retell what a writing frame looked like and what it was used for within a school. There was very little exploration of the data or discussion of the way that language and structure was used by the child in their completion of the two writing frames. Some mention was made to theoretical perspectives; however, this was not generally applied to the data, featuring more as a bolt-on section.

Higher level responses for Q2 were the strongest of all those attempted on the paper, with one candidate achieving full marks for their data analysis. This particular response was coherently written with succinct and appropriate examples effectively integrated throughout the analysis. There were detailed explanations of the impact writing frames have on students within school environments and how they have impacted on language development. The response also considered how features linked to theoretical concepts and these were used to develop and explore the data.

Example response – marks awarded 20/20

"Writing Frames" are a template-based print-outs that provide a scaffolding for children developing their writing skills. Their fundamental premise is based upon Vygotsky's theory of the proximal zone of development, which states that children have a certain difference in potential ability when asked to complete a task on their own against when aided/guided by a teacher or adult. Ideally, the expert ~~carries~~ carries the ~~strong~~ brunt of the cognitive strain required for the task and gradually pass over the responsibility to the developing child, however in a busy classroom setting frames can provide some level of that without physical adult presence.

Here, the frames serve as a template to teach the child of the discourse conventions and structure of an experiment. It helps the child divide that task into sub-tasks of planning (what the ingredients will be), Prediction/hypothesis-making (predictions for texture, appearance, taste, length of preparation), as

Compared with observations about the outcome (in all the same fields ^{quantities} except for texture), and recording procedure (what they did), as well as quantitative analysis; the child answered the length of preparation question in the same ^{qualitative} vein as the rest of the questions before being nudged in the direction of a more accurate answer by the teacher in the first frame, and the box for the number in the second.

The frames, and indeed the design of the experiment as a whole, draws on a concrete experience a child of that age group probably had, i.e. Fruit juice & its making, rather than a more abstract experiment testing a natural phenomenon, the type for which this elementary frame prepares. As such, this is a purpose-oriented, non-fiction writing genre, and the frame takes on the helpful form of prior-knowledge against revision of information.

The ~~flexibility~~ frame system, although designed to restrict writing into a certain format, does allow for flexibility helpful for the learning process. The teacher is able to add comments and questions guiding the child into the expected answer, rather than outright crossing out her "mistakes", e.g. "about how many minutes?" "will it be thick or runny?". This allows the child to elaborate rather than feel they are "correcting" their behaviour, which is often difficult to accomplish at that age.

The second frame pushes the child ~~in~~ towards using listing discourse markers, e.g. "First, Next". Moreover, the child introduced an element of subjective opinion in the taste section "I liked it", which was an acceptable use of subjectivity as compared to "quite a long time". Also on the level of grammar, the frame encourages the child's ability to form basic compound sentences via syndetic listing, e.g. "rilly pineapple ^{and} ~~saw~~ ^{quite} ~~and~~ sweet", "lumpy and runny and --", though the child showcases an age-typical over-reliance on the conjunction "and", and so has repetitive structure. In addition, the frames encourage the use of adjectives to

describe ^{& predict} various features of the object being studied, e.g. "lumpy", and the child already shows competence with basic intensifiers, 'a bit, quite, rilly'. She even shows creative utterance, as Chomsky would put it, in her use of "pineapple" as an adjective.

As for lexis, the child naturally gravitates with the help of the frames to the appropriate field-related ^{hypernyms} ~~lexical corpus~~, such as the use of color, viscosity and taste to describe a culinary item. The child does seem to have an issue with antonymous words, e.g. "thick vs runny", which the teacher corrects, suggesting that the child picked up that the words are relevant to the description of texture but does not fully comprehend what they mean or ~~at~~ describe.

The child shows awareness of morphological structure, specifically in her use of a prefix in "brawny". Moreover, the child makes "virtuous ~~but~~ errors" transcribing the phonemes into graphemes, e.g. "rilly", "mixture", which ^{neither} the teacher nor

the frame makes attempt to adjust, opting instead to focus on the structure overall and the meanings of individual words. ~~Another~~ Another unadjusted "error" is the lack of capitalization in the first frame, though the child does show awareness of capitalization and punctuation in the second frame.

- ④ The child is also encouraged to learn the use of ^{the} modal auxiliary "could" in the recommendations section of the second frame.
- ⑤ and her use of a negating suffix in "un-wisdom".

The response opens with a secure and sustained overview of writing frames. Consideration is made to a wide range of language features and the response follows the framework systematically: discourse, grammar, lexis, graphology. Textual examples from the data are sustained and sophisticated. The terminology use is accurate and relevant to the points being made. There is an evaluative application of theoretical concepts used to examine the data.

In Q3, candidates were required to analyse two webpages from HSBC. The question prompted candidates to consider how the data represented the language of financial institutions. As with Q1 and 2, the task required candidates to show a clear understanding and application of relevant concepts and issues to the data; to explain the construction of meaning in the data and to make relevant links to contextual factors and language features, supporting their explanation with exemplification from the data.

Responses at the lower end of the marks awarded gave a general overview of what financial organisations did and the different ways they use to engage with their customers. Many responses provided a general summary of the webpages, what they contained and how they targeted a student audience. There was very little use of terminology when features were identified and the comments were not always supported by exemplification from the text. Contextual exploration was also fairly general.

Due to the small entry for the January series, there were no examples within the top levels. Responses at an A/B boundary should include a balanced discussion into the language of financial institutions and how they connect with their audiences through the use of syntactical, lexical and pragmatic features. Within the examples seen this series, a number of candidates had used the theories of Fairclough, Grice and Levison and Brown to explore the data, however for an A/B grade these need to be used to illuminate and challenge the data rather than act as bolt-on paragraphs.

Example response – marks awarded 9/20

Financial institutions are like any other business. They need to draw in customers, keep up a good public image and advertise their services. Because of that, there is a certain language they have to use with their customers. For example, they ~~talk~~^{speech} formally as a way ~~to~~ to show respect to their ~~clients~~^{customers}. There is also a terminology they use that goes as unexplained, assuming the person is already educated.

Text C1 and C2 follow that as they ~~of~~ present offers and aid for certain things such as Credit Interest and ~~Interest free~~ interest free overdraft without explaining the terms. There is ~~not~~ a formality in the texts, but not a strict one. For example, in the sentence in text C1, "Credit Interest in the first year on balances up to £1000", there is no slinky ^{no} casualness ~~that~~ ~~there is something wrong with the syntax~~. However, in other sentences such as "Including 20% off coach travel", there ~~is~~^{structure} ~~is~~ ~~is~~ sentences are dependent clauses yet in text C1 they are

put in ~~the~~ sentences on their own. This is a common marketing strategy in order to place emphasis on a certain part of the text to persuade the reader to buy their product or service. The sentences also ~~a~~ can be like this because advertisements have to deliver their message in a quick and short way.

Another aspect ^{of} Financial institutions are their numbers. The language of financial institutions includes lots of numbers and percentages because ~~they~~ ^{their} firm is about the money after all. In text C2, there is ~~a~~ ^{numerous} ~~number~~ numerical figures mentioned in order to inform their customers. Examples of this are the following: "Maximum overdraft available is £3000 free of overdraft interest..." and "... the first £1000 in your Student Bank Account, will earn interest ^{at 1.5%} above base rate."

Providing information is another feature financial institutions have in common with commercial ~~businesses~~ businesses. They have to be clear and informative or ~~there~~ ^{no one} ~~else~~ will buy their service or they might receive backlash if any information is withheld. Text C2 follows this as they make several warnings like "Please note, applicants for overdraft must be 18 or over." On the other hand, ^{text} C1 lacks ~~that~~ any warnings. In fact, ~~the~~ ^{the} text C1 does

not provide any detailed information, and instead mostly focuses on advertising their services.

As for the terminology, it is not explained in text C1 & because it is assumed the audience is knowledgeable about the financial world which is common among financial institutions.

Meanwhile, ~~text~~ ^{text} C2 does explain the terminology at the bottom of the page. This is not wrong, but simply uncommon for financial institutions.

In conclusion, // text C1 seems to follow the language of commercial businesses whose aims are usually to advertise and sell their good or service. As for text C2, it uses the language of financial institutions with an exception of the terminology, but other than that, text C2 has more of the language of financial institutions than text C1.

The response has a clear opening which discusses the context behind financial institutions and their need to 'draw in customers', although this is more of a recount rather than an exploration. There is mention made to the use of: formal language / banking terminology/ use of marketing strategies/sentence structures and their purpose and the use of numbers, although these are more feature spotting than a fully developed analysis of the language framework. There is a general understanding of the implied audience but there are no theory or concepts discussed and the response requires more depth of exploration to achieve a higher mark.

Section B

Questions 5, 6 and 7 required the candidates to use their wider research to discuss the statements given in the question. Each question enabled the candidates to build an argument for or against the statement and to support their ideas with evidence and concepts from their wider research.

Q5 posed the question: 'Being able to speak English is often considered a status symbol in India'. Candidates needed to consider relevant language frameworks and levels and any relevant social, historical and cultural factors when answering this question.

Responses at the lower end of the marks generally retold the history of the colonisation of India by the British or the impact of Christianity and there was little if any discussion of the framework with supporting data, research or theoretical analysis. There was also a lack of argument presented in relation to the question.

At the higher end there were a number of secure level 5 responses. In the previous series candidates had tended to retell everything they knew about the history of the country, whereas this series the historical and social context was used to explore the evolution of English within India. Candidates analysed the morphological nature of the language, the lexical choices made and phonological features that identified speakers of English in India. Consideration was made to coinage and the origins of words both within India and the British Isles. There was also more evidence of candidates establishing a discussion centred around the question posed.

Example response – mark awarded 26/30

India is a nation that has 18 official language and English is seen as an associate Language which is used in schools, industries, politics and many more. Knowing English means alot to Indian people and can mean that you will have a better standard of life. The origins of Indian English, language frameworks, ^{and the} social and cultural factors will be analysed in the following paragraphs.

The first British connection that India had with English was in 1608 when the East India Company arrived in Gujarat and Goa (approximately at the same time) in order to create trade relations within the Indian Sub-continent. By 1765, the British were basically controlling everything including politres, building railways and industries and by electing themselves as leaders. This period became know as 'The Raj'. However, English was not forced into the Indian population but was rather spread through Christian

Missionaries. Soon the English language was used by many Indian people and even though there were efforts to stop people using it they failed. From here on, English grew but due to the immense amount of dialects that India has many new lexicons and languages merging took place to create Indian English.

Next the language frameworks (consisting of Phonology, morphology, Lexis, Syntax and Semantics) will be explained.

The phonology of Indian English has many unique features in comparison to Standard English. The main reason behind this is that the Indians speaking in English are more prone to using phonemes of their mother tongue. One of these features is that the dental fricative /θ/ is replaced with /th/ and that the phoneme /ð/ is substituted with /d/. This suggests that the consonant /h/ cannot be stressed in word like 'that' from the text. Another important point is the retroflex tapped 'r' in words such as 'engineering' and 'working'. The tel phoneme /r/ is repeated several times when pronouncing these words in Indian English. In addition, there are many cases of V-W merging

in words such as 'where' which becomes 'wvhere' in Indian English. This disability to distinguish between 'w' and 'v' is also important. Furthermore words such as 'tin' and 'pin' have an unaspirated /p/ and /t/ phonemes where air is not passed through the nasal cavity. Indian English also has a lot of Monophthongisation where diphthongs become monophthongs in words such as 'rate'.

Next, the morphology of ^{Indian} ~~this text~~ English will be assessed. There are many word formations, such as 'Bollywood' which is formed through the Indian word 'Bombay' and English word 'Hollywood'. Suffixes are often added, the 'fy' suffix is added to the Indian English word 'moska' to make it 'mustafy' which changes the tense. Also, progressive tenses are created by adding the morpheme 'ing' in places where they are not needed; 'Do you wanting this?'. Many words are pluralized when they should not such as 'furnitures, litters', meanwhile other words are not pluralized like 'relative' 3. 'Are your relative coming?'. Indian

English also has the feature where many English words are shortened, this is perhaps due to the fact that Indians speak in a fast pace. Examples include where 'enthusiastic' becomes 'enthu' and 'fundamental' becomes 'fundas'. There are also compound formations in Indian English to signify gender, such as cousin brother or cousin sister.

Next, special features of the lexis in Indian English include the use of acronyms, abbreviation and coinages. Acronyms include 'MPK' which stands for 'Maine Pyar Kiya', so Indians use English letters for acronym. Famous abbreviations include 'princi' which stands for 'principle' and 'sobsi' which stands for 'subsidiary'. Coinages includes words such as veranda, bungalow, jungle, pyjama which are now used in standard English as well.

Another language framework is syntax. Indian English fails to use the articles 'a', 'an' and 'the' and is often replaced by numerical values; for examples 'There is one tree'.

Reduplication is another famous feature in Indian English, this is done to create stress on the words, an example is 'Come! Come! Sit! Sit!'. As mentioned before progressive tenses are also used alot such as 'Do you eating pizza?'. The words 'only' and 'itself' are also used often, for example 'Shall we complete it now itself?', these are used to signify time and date.

Famous semantic differences include the meaning of 'what is your good name?' and 'pass out'. 'what is your good name?' means the full name while 'pass out' is to 'graduate'.

Moving on the social, cultural and technological features will be analysed. Social Factors will be mentioned below. In order to get jobs in India a good command of English is required, therefore many workers learn spoken English even though their grammar may be incorrect. This highly affects Indian English. Another social factor is tourism. Since India is a famous destination for tourist many English

speakers arrive in the country and the Indian citizen attempt to speak in English in order to get jobs such as tour guides or rickshaw drivers. Another factor is how important English is to the younger generations, in order to seem cool many younger children often attempt to speak in English despite the fact that they are not fluent. When this happens they tend to merge Indian words and phrases when speaking in English.

Next, the technological factors will be stated. Bollywood is one of the most important industries in India and nearly everyone is influenced by it. Many of the modern Bollywood movies such as Ra One have English dialogues. When viewers watch this they want to be more like these stars and attempt speaking in English. Through technology such as mobile phones everyone becomes used to using English. Even the contact names will have to be stored in English.

Finally the cultural aspect will

be discussed. In the Indian culture knowing English will mean that you are 'more knowledgeable' and the ability to get jobs is increased. Furthermore, as India was a British Colony there is a certain amount of pride in knowing English so everyone attempts to speak it. Moreover, parents often tend to get their daughter married to a person who can converse in English which would upgrade their status. India also follows the cast system which means only the richer families will be able to send their children to decent schools where they will learn English. The others barely learn the standard English leading to the dialect of Indian English. The Indian culture also has ~~also~~ a feature where respect is given to more educated people and elderly people, many Indians use the words 'Sir' and 'Madam' when addressing a person of a higher hierarchy or who is more educated. ~~It~~ In order to become respected, see noticed and praised in the Indian culture a good command

of English is vital. Since many people attempt to speak in English a dialect known as Indian English was created.

Overall, Indian English has brought many advantages to the Indian community including industries, jobs and development. However, the class deviation continues to grow since the communities in villages have little or no access to English.

Despite the opening being heavily focused on history - East India Company / Christianity, the candidate does apply the language framework to discuss phonology - fricatives / consonants.... Reference is made to data in Section A and the candidate's own research. Exploration is made to the origins of words - 'Bollywood' and coinage by English speakers of words from India: 'Bungalow'. Discussion is sustained and developed, presenting the candidate's own opinion. There is the establishment of a discussion centred around the question posed and this regularly links back to the question. At the end of the response the candidate considers how Indian English has 'brought many advantages to the Indian community'. It does lack theory / concepts to pose alternative attitudes.

Q6 posed the question: 'Providing young children with writing frames can lay a foundation for literacy.' Candidates needed to consider relevant language frameworks and levels and any relevant social, historical and cultural factors when answering this question.

Responses at a level 1 or low level 2 generally made sweeping statements that were not supported by evidence of research or data from Section A. Theoretical perspectives were occasionally included but were not used to explore the data. There was very little evidence of own research or opinion based on the statement given in the question.

For level 4 and 5 the responses seen included candidates' own research within primary schools, together with their wider investigations. This accumulation of data enabled the candidates to support and challenge the data provided for Section A. Theoretical discussion was wide and ranging but not always used effectively to explore the language framework. It is recommended that centres encourage their students to use theory to explore and develop their discussions rather than including all they know about child language as bolt-on paragraphs that are unconnected to the topic. There was a far better attempt by candidates on Q6 to develop and maintain an argument/discussion.

Writing develops later than speech, both historically speaking and in the lifetime of a child. Indeed, writing systems did not exist for all of human history. As such, emphasis in research has often been placed on the development of spoken language, and when writing development is actually studied, it is studied in the parallel context of speaking. However, research has been made in the area, both practical applied research and theory, and a proven helpful stepping stone into literacy is writing frames, which has become standard practice in many schools.

Kroll broadly divides the writing development of children into four ^{stages} widely accepted in the linguistic community. The first stage is preparation for writing, for example by beginning to understand meaning can be encoded in graphical elements. At this stage speech is much more developed than writing, which ^{may be} is limited even be limited to understanding associating drawings, such as company logos, with meanings for the child. In the second stage, often started with the beginning of a formal education/school, children begin to incorporate their understanding of spoken language into written, simply transcribing what they would say into symbols with linearity, directionality, and distinction from drawing. More imperfectly

For this topic are the third & fourth stages, which are differentiation & integration respectively. The child begins to understand that written language often takes on a different form, or even purpose (that it tends to rely less on instrumental, personal and interactional functions of language as per Halliday's theories) than spoken languages. The frames aid this by teaching the child various templates and structures that diverge from spoken language depending on the purpose. For instance, formal discourse markers (Firstly, ~~the more~~) or indeed the concept of register, are taught by giving children templates that have separate spaces designed in this way. For the final stage of integration, the child begins to understand the overlaps, differences and functions of spoken and written language with such a proficiency that a scaffolding is no longer needed by that stage.*

As discussed in the previous question, writing frames are a direct application of Vygotsky's theory of the zone of proximal development, as there is marked improvement when the "expert", in this case the frame coupled with teacher supervision, accompanies the child, corroborating the theory's statement of the difference in potential between a lone and assisted child.

Although these scholarly debates have centered around spoken language development, one could apply the competing theories of behaviorism, Nativism and LASS to gain a potentially useful insight into writing development and writing

Frames. Chomsky's attack on Skinner's assertion that children learn primarily by reinforcement, on the grounds that children have an innate ability to acquire language via their brain (Language Acquisition Device/LAD) does not fully apply to writing since, as mentioned previously, writing did not exist for all of human history. Brune's ideas of a Language Acquisition Support System hold more merit here, in my opinion, since the scaffolding ^{for instance} guides and directs the writing skills of the child, and no child learns writing inevitably without direct adult intervention by mere exposure to a myriad of texts around them. In fact, the approach of earlier research on the subject of writing was that children must be directly taught literacy at a school age before which they are unequipped for such a task, though more recent approaches of emergent literacy, based on the observation children connect ~~to~~ create meanings before a school age in the modern sign-filled urban world, are more currently favored.

Writing frames help the child understand that writing serves a function and has certain discourse conventions, and it should ideally do so in a set of stages, according to applied research. First, the teacher performs ^{exemplar} a model in front of the class. Afterwards, another frame is ~~produced~~ filled out by teacher-child collaboration. Then and only then can the child perform one unaccompanied, which is later commented on by the teacher. When the child is proficient enough, the use of a scaffold is no longer

necessary. This approach works best for children of average to low writing abilities, and when they do learn a certain genre, they are capable over time to transfer the skills they learned to other genres so the learning process gets easier & faster the more frame forms a child masters.

Care should be taken, however, to incorporate the child's lived experiences, social, cultural and otherwise, into the learning process so as not to impede it. Teachers making and ~~is~~ commenting on frames should not be ^{inflexible or} dismissive of children's ^{literacy} upbringing, or cultural influences on it, as Lakoff warns in "The Logic of Non-Standard English", and as is corroborated by Shirley Heath's research into the working class black communities of Traston, wherein she found ^{pre-school} communal literacy practices, such as older children ^{spontaneously} teaching younger ones "what it says" on traffic signs, letter addresses and fast food chain signs. ~~In fact~~ On a related note, children are encouraged to work in groups or read each other's model work sometimes, to make use of Vygotsky's concept of a More Knowledgeable Other (MKO) to accelerate the learning process.

In conclusion, writing frames have a proven effectiveness on teaching literacy, and double as good evidence for ~~Vygotsky's~~ the proximal development theory. Although children begin associating meanings with ^{stand-ins} long before school age, such as during pretend-play, ^(a box can be a car etc.) writing frames can make good use of these cultivated abilities by being designed to draw on familiar experience at first. They can also

be designed for each ^{progressive} cognitive developmental stage ² for the child's growth, increasing in difficulty and unfamiliarity, & abstractness as per cognitive developmental models of Piaget et al. They teach useful linguistic key constituents, from encouraging certain vocabulary, to ~~str.~~ grammatical/discourse structures.

① Kroll acknowledges, however, that these boundaries are "artificial", as the development varies from child to child and ~~is~~ is not necessarily as ~~the~~ rigid or exception-lacking as the theoretical model.

② Though the debate of whether or not our brains are naturally evolved for writing is somewhat ~~disputed~~ ongoing in the field.

The candidate starts by exploring and challenging the statement made within the question. Data used to establish the candidate's opinion/argument is effectively integrated and shows evidence of wider research. The candidate explores the purpose of writing frames and critically evaluates the theoretical concepts underpinning CDS: behaviourism, nativism... The response concludes by linking back to the question.

Q7 posed the question: 'The language of financial institutions can be unnecessarily complex and confusing.' Candidates needed to consider relevant language frameworks and levels and any relevant social, historical and cultural factors when answering this question.

Candidates writing at a level 1 to 2 for Q7 generally described what financial institutions did with limited discussion of language or structural features. Many candidates spent much of their response discussing how the language of financial institutions was complicated and difficult for the customer to understand or showed a limited understanding of who customers of banks were, assuming it was only the rich and upper/middle classes who used them.

Due to the small entry, there were no examples at a level 4 or 5. Responses at an A/B boundary should include a balanced discussion into the language of financial institutions and how they connect with their audiences through the use of syntactical, lexical and pragmatic features. Within the examples seen this series, a number of candidates had used the theories of Fairclough, Grice and Levison and Brown to explore the data, however for an A grade these need to be used to illuminate and challenge the data rather than act as bolt-on paragraphs.

To achieve an A in Section B, responses need to reflect on the candidate's wider research and to use this to explore how financial institutions use language to engage with their audience. There needs to be a critical examination of the contextual factors in relation to the language features, with the use of appropriate terminology and theoretical discussion.

Paper Summary

Based on their performance on this paper, I would like to offer the following advice to candidates.

Candidates need to:

- ensure they understand the key features of a transcript
- adopt an appropriate formal register and style when writing a critical essay
- understand the importance of covering the language framework when analysing the data in all questions. To ensure they support their discussion with appropriate theories, concepts and contextual features
- avoid feature spotting by always relating back to the language features
- create a discussion/debate for Section B, giving their own opinion in response to the statement
- include evidence of their wider research within Section B
- use theoretical discussion to explore and challenge/support their findings rather than including everything they can remember about a particular theory/theorist
- manage their time effectively to ensure they allow sufficient time for both questions.