Examiners' Report
Principal Examiner Feedback

January 2023

Pearson Edexcel International Advanced Subsidiary and International Advanced Level In English Language (WEN04) Paper 01

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Introduction

The purpose of this report is to provide centres with an overview of the performance of the January 2023 paper. This paper offers a choice of four topic areas focusing on global English, child language development, language and power and language and technology. The pre-release material was available to centres via the Pearson website in August 2022, enabling candidates time to research their chosen subtopic in preparation for the exam on 16th January 2023.

The sub-topics for the January series were:

1. Belizean Kriol
2. Mealtime Interactions
3. Sales representatives
4. Military Communication in World War Two

Candidates should read through both questions, as well as the source material for Section A, before beginning their written response. This will allow them to gain an understanding of the focus of the task and, with regards to Section B, the perspective for discussion. Candidates performed well, engaged positively with the data and demonstrated their subject knowledge in their responses.

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. All candidates answered the corresponding questions for Sections A and B this series.

The most popular choice was Question 1 and its corresponding question in Section B, Question 5 – Global English (Belizean Kriol).

The remaining questions were as follows:

Second popular – Q2/6 Child Language Development (Mealtime Interactions)
Third popular – Q3/7 Language and Power (Sales Representatives)
Least popular – Q4/8 Language and Technology (Military Communication in World War Two)

Section A.

Question 1.
For Question 1, candidates were asked to analyse a transcript from a cookery tutorial. Candidates were required to focus on the language frameworks, the context behind the transcript and to introduce relevant theories and concepts to explore the language of Belizean Kriol. Candidates awarded in the higher levels of the mark scheme used the language framework to analyse the transcripts and the way the speakers' demonstrated features of Belizean Kriol. Top level responses covered a range of features including grammatical, phonological and lexical features using sophisticated terminology as well as explanations of non-standard features linking to the contextual factors and their research.

Many candidates referenced theories of language change, accommodation theory, prescriptivism and were able to identify specific features associated with Belizean Kriol and discuss their development. There was an awareness of Belizean history, the development of the Kriol and knowledge of the specific phonetic features and articulation. This demonstrated confidence in their analysis and allowed for relevant and discriminating selection of source material.

At the lower end of the mark range for Question 1, candidates generally resorted to a descriptive approach when exploring what the data provided and any examples selected were unassimilated and at times paraphrased. Weaker candidates tended to feature spot and describe what was there particularly with phonology and lexis. Candidates would mention some terminology such as word class or phonology and be able to link one or two features to language development. However, the majority of candidates showed confidence with the topic and demonstrated strong linguistic analysis of Global English building on their skill set from studying varieties of English at AS level for the Unit WEN02-Language in Transition.

Question 2.
For Question 2, candidates were asked to analyse two transcripts from mealtime interactions between parents and their children. The child in Text 1 was aged 2 years and 3 months while the children in Text 2 were aged 4 years and 2 months and 7 years. The transcripts provided data which covered a range of features associated with different stages of language development. Candidates were required to discuss to what extent the texts were representative of interactions with children during
Mealtimes.

Candidates scored across levels 1-4. Mid-level candidates produced a clear response and demonstrated their knowledge of language development with close relation to the different stages. Candidates were systematic in their approach, commenting on a range of features across the levels and were able link features to theories of language development. The progression of phonological, lexical and grammatical development was discussed using examples from data such as the wider range of vocabulary in B2 and the more grammatically complete utterances when interacting with their parents. Candidates recognised the strategies used by parents during mealtime to provide opportunities for the children to engage in conversation and encourage interaction.

Responses at the lower end of the mark range tended to describe the features and make statements regarding strategies used by the parents without linking it to the stages of development or described theories with limited reference to the data.

Question 3.
For Question 3, candidates were asked to analyse the language used in an interaction between a customer and sales representative during a telephone call. The customer had contacted the sales representative to discuss the booking of her holiday. Candidates were asked to what extent the text was representative of the language used by sales representatives. Candidates scored across level 1-4 demonstrating clear and discriminate understanding of the data and confidence with discussing the topic. Level 4 responses identified a range of features used to inform and persuade the customer to book tours with the company while on their holiday. These were also linked to theories of power and pragmatics showing knowledge of the specific technique's representatives use to secure a sale. This was the discriminator between the level 4 and level 3 candidates as those in level 3 lacked theoretical application linking mainly to synthetic personalisation and rhetorical techniques to persuade. Lower-level candidates did not comment on a wide enough range of features or made no reference to theories. Some applied a descriptive approach and could describe what the sales representative was doing but lacked the terminology or linguistic expression to be awarded within higher bands.

Question 4.
For Question 4, candidates were asked to analyse a selection of data taken from three types of military communication during World War Two: two-way radio transmission between infantry soldiers, a telegram and radio transmission between air crew. Candidates were asked to discuss to what extent the texts were representative of the language used in military communication in World War Two.

 This question had the lowest entries which were awarded within levels 3 and 4. The candidates engaged well with the data and showed evidence of research and were able to select relevant features related to the technology including phonetic code and sequences to ensure clear precise communication. However, there was a lack of range with regards to the features and in theoretical application which prevented marks within the upper higher levels. The candidates were able to make links to the contextual factors of the communication and showed understanding of the strict protocols required during war time.

Section B

Questions 5, 6, 7 and 8 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.

Question 5

The question posed the statement: 'English is the official language of Belize, but developments in Kriol literacy mean that there is a change in attitudes towards non-standard varieties.' Candidates needed to consider relevant language frameworks and levels and any relevant social, historical and cultural factors when answering this question.

Responses ranged between level 2 and level 5 with some candidates providing well researched and detailed answers. A lot of candidates were awarded within level 4 and wrote long detailed answers suggesting they had allowed themselves more time to complete this question. The best responses were those candidates who were able to tailor their knowledge and research to form an argumentative response to the question. Mid-level responses tended to focus on the historical development of Belizean Kriol making links to the slave trade and the stigma of certain features within its use in education or professional formats. Lower levels demonstrated knowledge of the history of Belizean Kriol and its development but were unable to develop their answer beyond that and make reference to the debate posed within the question. Higher level responses covered a range of features present within Belizean Kriol, made links to theorists, development of literacy and the kriol dictionary, historical development and attitudes towards the variety referencing its importance to cultural identity.

Question 6.

The question posed the statement: 'Evidence suggests that interactions during shared family mealtimes are vital to the behaviour and development of a child'. Candidates needed to consider relevant language frameworks and levels and any relevant social, historical and cultural factors when answering this question.

Candidates scored across level 1 to level 4 producing some interesting responses. Those within level 2 and low level 3 made some good points regarding the language features used during mealtime interactions to engage children but were largely under-developed responses with limited focus on the behaviour and language development. The weakest responses focused on the stages of language development and the need for interaction with care givers but made general points that did not agree or disagree with the question posed. Mid-level responses went beyond this and made reference to observations and case studies they had researched with varying degrees of relevance. Strong candidates presented knowledge and understanding of language acquisition, the different factors which can impact ability and knowledge of the long-term benefits of mealtime interaction to a child's development. Some made links to the benefits of

stimulating environments, the behaviourist theory and positive reinforcement as well as the impact to social and interactive skills. Evidence that was collected was well integrated within responses and used to establish an argument.

Question 7.

The question posed the statement: 'Successful sales representatives need to develop strategic language and persuasive techniques in order to sell effectively'. Candidates needed to consider relevant language frameworks and levels and any relevant social, historical and cultural factors when answering this question.

This was the most popular question and candidates produced well-structured arguments demonstrating an engagement with the research and topic. Candidates were awarded across level 2 to 4 focusing largely on evidence they had found in their research. Higher level responses engaged in theoretical discussion showing strong understanding of the power dynamics employed by sales representatives and how strategic their techniques are in generating sales making links to pragmatics. Low level responses were unable to form a structured argument and produced undeveloped response which focused on general sales language and how certain terminology can persuade individuals with little reference to specific language features.

Question 8.

The question posed the statement: 'Developments in communication technology had a significant impact during World War Two, but it was important that the military followed strict protocols when using the technology'. Candidates needed to consider relevant language frameworks and levels and any relevant social, historical and cultural factors when answering this question.

There were only a few responses to this question which scored level 2, 3 and 4. Candidates did perform well on this question demonstrating evidence of wide-ranging research into the protocols and communication utilised in Worl War Two. Some candidates made reference to encryption and hierarchies withing the military which enforced a style of communication to ensure locations and officials were not identifiable if intercepted. There was a focus on the question and the candidates were able to form an argument regarding the need for strict protocols to ensure secure communication. There was a lack of terminology within the responses which would have secured more marks but candidates engaged well with the question.

Paper Summary

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

- ensure you employ effective time management in the examination to ensure that appropriate time is spent on Section A and B in relation to the number of marks awarded

- read all the source data carefully before attempting the questions in Section A

- support each point you make with evidence from the source material in Section A and your wider research in Section B

- make sure you cover the language framework when analysing the data in both Section A and B

- support your discussion with appropriate theories, concepts and contextual features

- create a discussion/debate for Section B, tailoring your research to the question and form an argument responding to the statement

- use theoretical discussion to explore and challenge/support your findings rather than including everything you can remember about a particular theory/theorist or the main body of your research.

Grade Boundaries

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