

Mark scheme January 2004

GCE

English Language B

Unit ENB6

Copyright © 2004 AQA and its licensors. All rights reserved.

Unit 6: Language Development

GENERAL PRINCIPLES

The aim of this module is to engage candidates in a detailed examination of the concepts and theories of language acquisition and language change using the knowledge, understanding and skills they have developed over all the AS and A2 modules (synopticity). Like Module 2, this module 6 requires candidates to demonstrate their understanding of the interconnection of specific features of language and their appropriate application to different social contexts. There is an additional demand that these contexts will include texts and data relating to the acquisition of English by children and the growth of and changes in language over time.

In common with all modules in this specification, references to research (AO4) relate to the definition published in 2001 by AQA. This definition is as follows and examiners should interpret all references to research in exam questions accordingly:

Research embraces not only published studies encountered in academic sources, but equally the findings of candidates themselves through exploration of their own data in classroom settings and beyond. As a general principle, candidates will be expected to offer appropriate evidence for points they make in their work. The ability to discuss language data and issues in objective and critical ways is at the core of a good candidate performance.

Assessment Objectives

This module requires candidates to:

- AO1 communicate clearly the knowledge, understanding and insight appropriate to the study of language, using appropriate terminology and accurate and coherent expression (2.5% A2)
- AO3ii apply and explore frameworks for the systematic study of language at different levels, commenting on the usefulness of approaches taken (5% A2)
- AO4 understand, discuss and explore concepts and issues relating to language in use (5% A2)
- AO5ii analyse and evaluate variation in the meanings and forms of spoken and written language from different times according to context (7.5% A2).

The Generic Numerical Mark Scheme and Indicative Content pages that follow specify the criteria and indicators that will guide examiners in judging how satisfactorily candidates have achieved these different objectives.

Examiners should mark scripts holistically but with an awareness of the band they would place the text in for each assessment objective. The final mark should reflect the greater weighting given to AO 3ii, AO4 and especially to AO5ii relative to the weighting given to AO1. Marginal and summative comments should refer to relevant coverage (indicative content) and to the assessment objectives.

Synopticity in a Text and Data Focused Specification

Unit 6 is the synoptic unit test for a text and data focused specification which always starts with language from contexts of actual use and develops relevant description and analysis based on language study principles. As such, unit 6 tests in a more developed and integrated way, knowledge, understanding and skills which will have been learned in the course of modules 1 to 5, as well as in module 6. A key focus for this learning will be the methods for working with texts including knowledge of how to work open-mindedly, tentatively and methodically with varied primary sources, including how to apply the insights of language study and research to this analysis.

Data-focused questions make different demands to essay titles with no associated data. There is more credit for the application of knowledge shown in the detailed engagement with the particular material set. Such engagement includes research literacy including skills in reading diverse text types such as transcripts, phonemic symbols, dictionary entries, wordlists, tables, lists of words in their contexts of use (kwiclists) and others. It also includes skills in the selection of details which offer grounds for comparison, awareness of the limitations of the data, and awareness of possible contradictions and anomalies within it.

There will be less credit for the kind of general research literature surveys associated with essay question answers including the citing of named researchers and their key studies. Whilst such coverage should be credited for demonstrating AO4 knowledge, it may not be of primary importance in relation to AO3 and AO5 which are likely to be focused on the particular data set, its language features and the associated social context.

The June 2002 exam report reported a number of generic features found in stronger and weaker answers which showed this synoptic dimension of working with texts and data.

Stronger answers:

- addressed the question relevantly;
- engaged with the data in detail and with attention to its context;
- identified patterns and examples across the data set;
- expressed ideas clearly and accurately with appropriate terminology;
- identified language features accurately including grammatical and pragmatic aspects;
- showed informed insight into the data set whilst being cautious of its limitations;
- reflected an open-minded and tentative approach to the issues raised;
- showed assured conceptualised knowledge of language theories and studies;
- demonstrated strengths in quality of explanation and accuracy of expression.

Weaker answers:

- gave little or narrow relevant coverage of the question or the data;
- engaged with the data descriptively or by content summary;
- used language imprecisely with limited terminology;
- asserted ideas with underdeveloped explanations;
- showed limited knowledge and understanding of the issues;
- made no references to research ideas or few and simplistic references;
- treated the dataset as uncomplicatedly representative of the given situation;
- listed examples without observing underlying patterns;
- made sweeping statements on the basis of limited evidence ;
- gave narrow or partial coverage of the issues.

General Numerical Mark Scheme: All Questions

Marks	Skills Descriptors	
0-5	AO1	Rudimentary observations about relationships between language and development with particular reference to prescribed topic area; frequent lapses in control of written expression and scarcely any use of terminology.
	AO3ii	Very limited attempt at application of frameworks; generally not reliable and systematic; observations on data confined to one or two references.
	AO4	Comments on a factor governing language use in data, though not fully understood; attempts discussion of concept of language in use in relation to data but with very limited success.
	AO5ii	May refer to one or two factors influencing form, meaning and diversity in data; may refer to one or two contextual factors of data.
6-11	AO1	Some general observations about relationships between language and development with particular reference to prescribed topic area; lapses in control of written expression and little appropriate use of terminology.
	AO3ii	Limited attempt at application of frameworks; generally unreliable and rarely systematic; observations on data confined to isolated references.
	AO4	Elementary comment on one or two factors governing language use in data, though not always fully understood; attempts discussion of concept of language in use in relation to data but with limited success.
	AO5ii	Recognises one or two factors influencing form, meaning and diversity in data; identifies one or two contextual factors of data.
12-17	AO1	Makes observations, not always accurately, and with limited detail on relationships between language and development with particular reference to prescribed topic area; generally accurate written expression and some appropriate use of terminology.
	AO3ii	Attempts some application of frameworks but not always successfully, reliably or systematically; some valid observations on data.
	AO4	some awareness of a limited number of factors governing language use in data; discusses concept of language in use in relation to data.
	AO5ii	Recognises some features influencing form, meaning and diversity in data; identifies some contextual factors of data .

18-23	AO1	Generally accurate observations about relationships between language and development with particular reference to prescribed topic area; accurate and clear written expression and appropriate use of terminology.
	AO3ii	Application of frameworks to data evident, but some lapses in reliability and lacking in systematic treatment; some valid and sensible observations on data and touching on subtler awareness (including grammatical points or other technical aspects).
	AO4	Some understanding of a number of factors governing language use in data; discusses concept of language in use in relation to data with some effectiveness.
	AO5ii	Some awareness of contextual factors influencing form, meaning and diversity in data; identifies and interprets a number of contextual factors of data.
24-29	AO1	Clear observations about relationships between language and development with particular reference to prescribed topic area; very controlled written expression and sound use of terminology.
	AO3ii	Generally reliable and systematic application of frameworks to the data; makes generally secure linguistic observations on data. Engages with more technical aspects such as grammar, discourse or cohesion.
	AO4	Sound understanding of factors governing language use in data; often effective discussion of concept of language in use in relation to data.
	AO5ii	Shows awareness of factors influencing form, meaning and diversity in data; generally clear description and interpretation of distinctive contextual factors of data.
30-35	AO1	Clear and detailed observations about relationships between language and development with particular reference to prescribed topic area; exemplary written expression and accurate use of terminology.
	AO3ii	Reliable and systematic application of frameworks to the data; makes informed linguistic observations on data. Engages with more technical aspects such as grammar, discourse or cohesion.
	AO4	Perceptive insight into many factors governing language use in data; effective discussion of concept of language in use in relation to data.
	AO5ii	Shows understanding of factors influencing form, meaning and diversity in data; clear description and interpretation of distinctive contextual factors of data.

Indicative Content about Texts

The following indicative content gives some of the relevant coverage in relation to assessment objectives 1, 3ii, 4 and 5ii. Examiners should seek to credit the identification of language features of all types in relation to contextual factors. The following lists are neither prescriptive nor exhaustive. Given the constraints of this exam, very few candidates will have time to note most of the points made. Credit should also be given for insightful observations other than those made explicit below.

Structure of indicative content: This usually includes some outline of the issues raised by the texts and question and the general indication of what candidates are meant to be doing. This is structured under the assessment objectives headings for AO3ii, 4 and 5ii in the following ways:

AO1: Credit quality of explanation and degree to which candidate achieves an effective linguistic register (including terminology).

AO3ii: Credit coverage of significant linguistic features identified in relation to their effects.

AO4: Credit knowledge base of ideas from studies of language in use including research (fieldwork, theory, studies, methods for data analysis)

AO5ii: Credit coverage of contextual factors including situational factors (audience, purpose and context) and developmental factors (LA) or temporal (LC) factors.

Indicative Content

QUESTION 1: Language Acquisition – How the children and their caregivers manage the interaction in the playhouse.

This questions tests candidates' skills in analysing the discourse of young children playing together. As a synoptic question, it is as much about their skills for analysing data as about their specific knowledge of the theories of spoken acquisition. Where such knowledge is relevant it is as likely to be focused on social and pragmatic factors as on differences in grammar and lexis, although these are there to be found. There is also credit for noting the roles of the adult caregivers in monitoring and initiating some of the conversation. The data is quite hard to analyse because of the number of speakers and the difficulties they have in co-operating with each other. Examiners should be generous in crediting the analytical skills the students bring to bear on the analysis.

Assessment Objective 3 ii

Reward precision of observation and relevant application of terms and concepts about the language levels. Stronger responses will include some comment on grammatical and/or pragmatic choices. Credit groupings of examples across the data.

Lexis and Semantics

Fields of reference relate to play activities and role play;
Vocabulary from domestic contexts ("Mummy");
Pronouns, deictics and reference (shared contexts).

Grammar

Occasional difficulties with constructions ("I'm that one" for "I want that one");
Possible over-regularisation ("you've been ate");
Sentence types.

Pragmatics

Social expectations of behaviour in conversations;
Regulatory role of adult;
Possible gender stereotyping in some roles.

Discourse structure

Adult roles in initiating topics and asking questions;
Adult roles in regulating children's behaviour;
Ways in which disagreement is expressed and resolved;
Variety of activities and conversations;
Evidence of turntaking and co-operative behaviour (adjacency pairs);
Interruptions and overlaps and their effects.

Phonology

Reduplication;
Phonological play for its own sake;
Shouting.

Graphology/Gesture

Assessment Objective 4

Assessment Objective 4 tests knowledge of ideas, methods and evidence from studies of language in use. In Child Language Acquisition answers this will be evidenced by the theoretical and research frameworks the candidate is able to bring to bear on the analysis. The danger of such knowledge and understanding is that it is sometimes used without regard for the particular question and associated data. Examiners should seek to credit relevant knowledge as it applies to the particular data set and question focus and not knowledge for its own sake.

Such relevant knowledge pre-supposes a rich text interpretation. Deficit prescriptive evaluations will allow little relevant purchase on the data. Good candidates should be familiar with the kind of child language metalanguage indicated in the AO3 descriptors.

Stronger answers in the 24-35 range will be informed by secure knowledge of ideas from language study research. Responses will tend to be more explicit and wide ranging in their coverage, more probing and explicit in their analysis and more cautious in the way in which they draw conclusions on the basis of this evidence (due tentativeness). There may be some preparedness to consider the data and research background critically.

Answers in the 12-24 range will show some of the qualities in the range above but coverage will be less secure and consistent. For example answers may be uneven, oversimplified or over-assertive in their coverage of some important material. Some answers in this range may show an informed but undiscerning and/or inflexible use of secondary research.

Answers in the 0-11 band will include relevant answers which demonstrate no more than weak subject knowledge and understanding, and answers that are more fundamentally flawed.

Deficit accounts of children's language as inferior would suggest little understanding of the descriptive rich text interpretation that informs approaches based on language study principles and which is necessary to make sense of such transcripts.

Irrelevant answers may include those which give general chronological surveys of child development and can only be credited where coverage is appropriate to the question set.

Research coverage

Research coverage about how children behave in playgroups is not likely to take the form of published studies. In this question AO4 is more about the candidates' methodology for analysing the data rigorously. The candidates will show awareness that by the age of 4 children will have a grounding in spoken acquisition but there will still be occasional grammatical and lexical patterns of overgeneralisation and ellipsis and they will not yet be managing more elaborate structures (e.g. passives, modals). There should be some awareness of the social and pragmatic development of children at this age as they learn to operate in more complex communities away from their families. There will be an awareness of the adult roles in scaffolding and regulating children's language and behaviour, especially in institutional contexts such as nursery school. Stronger answers may critique some of the interactions of these adults and their dominant roles in the conversation.

Assessment Objective 5 ii

Contextual awareness is likely to be mixed in with coverage of AO3 and AO4 rather than in separate paragraphs. Contextual awareness will relate to:

1. the situational variation (use variation). Here this means the way the children use language in relation to the activities they are performing and the different roles and expectations of adults and children.
2. the specific contextual factors relating to language development. The level of linguistic and social development associated with children aged 3 and 4.

QUESTION 2: Language Acquisition – learning to write narrative as shown in the ‘Trapped’ stories.

This question offers scope for identifying linguistic features and relating these to a developmental model of emerging writing. The data represents the strong, middle and weaker levels of written maturation in the group and as such shows the very different pathways and levels of proficiency of young children of a similar age. The institutional context of a class activity in which everyone is compelled to write in response to a common stimulus has contextual significance and also allows the candidate to see some norms and variations across the data set.

Assessment Objective 3 ii

Reward precision of observation and relevant application of terms and concepts about the language levels. Stronger responses will include some comment on grammatical and/or pragmatic choices. Credit groupings of examples across the data.

Lexis and Semantics

Words associated with sequencing narrative;
Patterns in vocabulary, semantics and word classes.

Semantics

Reference including levels of control in explicitness and sequencing.

Grammar

Tense;
Inflexional and derivational aspects of vocabulary.

Discourse structure

Relationship of the texts to others likely to have been encountered;
Structures for sequencing and developing narrative;
Devices to enhance narrative interest.

Graphology

Control of layout including handwriting details (control and consistency);
Punctuation and other markers of sentence boundaries and discourse (paragraphing).

Orthography

Patterns in children’s spellings and their underlying principles; norms and variations.

Assessment Objective 4

Assessment Objective 4 tests knowledge of ideas, methods and evidence from studies of language in use. In Child Language Acquisition answers this will be evidenced by the theoretical and research frameworks the candidate is able to bring to bear on the analysis. Examiners should seek to credit relevant knowledge as it applies to the particular data set and question focus and not knowledge for its own sake.

Such relevant knowledge pre-supposes a rich text interpretation. Deficit prescriptive evaluations will allow little relevant purchase on the data. Good candidates should be familiar with the kind of child language metalanguage indicated in the AO3 descriptors.

Stronger answers in the 24-35 range will be informed by secure knowledge of ideas from language study research. Responses will tend to be more explicit and wide ranging in their coverage, more probing and explicit in their analysis and more cautious in the way in which they draw conclusions on the basis of this evidence (due tentativeness). There may be some preparedness to consider the data and research background critically.

Answers in the 12-24 range will show some of the qualities in the range above but coverage will be less secure and consistent. For example answers may be uneven, oversimplified or over-assertive in their coverage of some important material. Some answers in this range may show an informed but undiscerning and/or inflexible use of secondary research.

Answers in the 0-11 band will include relevant answers which demonstrate no more than weak subject knowledge and understanding, and answers that are more fundamentally flawed.

Deficit accounts of children's language as inferior would suggest little understanding of the descriptive rich text interpretation that informs approaches based on language study principles and which is necessary to make sense of such transcripts.

Irrelevant answers may include those which give general chronological surveys of child development and can only be credited where coverage is appropriate to the question set.

Research coverage

Textbook coverage of early writing is sparse by comparison with coverage of spoken acquisition research. Examiners should credit the analytical skills the candidates bring to bear on the question and data set even where there are only limited references to secondary sources of research.

AO4 credit should be given for informed, systematic and engaged coverage. The candidates will show awareness that literacy is acquired in a social context with deliberate strategies of support from more literate members of the community (at home or in school). Candidates will show awareness of the complexity of the process at the language levels of sounds and spellings, vocabulary and meaning, grammar and discourse (narrative). They will show an appreciation of the kinds of meanings children are reaching for (albeit with a limited control of language and the written mode): rich text interpretation rather than prescriptive evaluation should form the basis of observations made. At the highest level, candidates will settle into the uncertainty of some details showing due tentativeness about what can be known. As in other units, comments on more sophisticated and technical aspects of structure (grammar, cohesion and discourse) are likely to score more highly than comments about surface levels. The data provides opportunities for discussion of institutional contexts and the approach of this school.

Assessment Objective 5 ii

Contextual awareness is likely to be mixed in with coverage of AO3 and AO4 rather than in separate paragraphs. Contextual awareness will relate to:

- the situational variation including the school setting, the children's familiarity with narrative, the kinds of conversation which led to the writing. The support which was given to the children once they had the instruction.
- the specific contextual factors relating to written language development.

QUESTION 3: Language Change – dictionary entries and what they show about the ways in which words come into the language.

This question tests the ability of candidates to relate general ideas about lexical change, the development of language authorities, and narrative outlines of historical language change to a detailed account of how two words have come into the language. Both words are for animals not native to the British Isles and show unusual patterns in their etymology and orthography. The accounts of the words show clear patterned historical outlines with loan words from other languages originally spelled in various ways before being standardised more recently.

The citations give some evidence of the state of the standardisation of English at various times and candidates should be able to make a connection between this evidence and their knowledge of language change historical outlines. The data is set out using the standard conventions of the Oxford English Dictionary and centres have been given guidance to expect this. There is no expectation that candidates will be familiar with every convention and the accessible data is more than sufficient for answering the question.

Pragmatics

Assumptions of the readers' knowledge, skills and understanding;
Changing values and ideologies underpinning language use over time (use of ancient language etyma for hippopotamus).

Graphology and Orthography

Evidence of competing spellings and the standard spellings that were settled on and when;
Unusual spellings (esp. "raffe" and "mus") reflecting illegal or unlikely consonant/vowel clusters in the English writing system;
Ways in which the words are naturalised into the more standardised forms of English orthography;
Quotations of approximations of Arabic and Greek spelling;
Ways in which graphology signposts discourse in the entry;
Capitalisation, spelling regularisation;
Plurals (note available variations for hippopotamus).

Lexis

Competing lexical item for giraffe (camelopard);
Patterns in collocations in reported use.

Semantics

Variations in denotational meanings available;
Special status of dictionaries in authoritative fixing of meaning;
Possibilities of connotations;
Special collocations and their metaphoric and/or descriptive basis.

Grammar

Morphological structure of hippo-potamus/river-horse;
Patterns in standardisation of grammar in citations.

Assessment Objective 4

Assessment Objective 4 tests knowledge of ideas, methods and evidence from studies of language in use. Examiners should seek to credit relevant knowledge as it applies to these texts and to the question.

Stronger answers in the 24-25 range will be informed by secure knowledge of ideas from language study. As a result of this they will tend to be more explicit and wide ranging in their coverage, more probing and explicit in their analysis and more cautious in the way in which they draw conclusions on the basis of limited evidence (due tentativeness).

Answers in the 12-24 range will show some of the qualities in the range above but coverage will be less secure and consistent. For example answers may be uneven, oversimplified or over-assertive in their coverage of some important material. Some answers in this range may show an informed but undiscerning and/or inflexible use of secondary research.

Answers in the 0-11 band will include relevant answers which demonstrate no more than weak subject knowledge and understanding, and answers that are more fundamentally flawed.

Deficit accounts and evaluative accounts of varieties of language as inferior would suggest little understanding of the descriptive rich text interpretation that informs approaches based on language study principles and which is necessary to make sense of such data.

Irrelevant answers may include those which give general chronological surveys of language development and can only be credited where coverage is appropriate to the question set.

Research coverage

The processes of the diffusion and codification of new words are not particularly well covered in Language textbooks although there are many accessible sources which include some coverage of dictionaries including the OED. See Crystal's encyclopedias.

Assessment Objective 5ii

Candidates will show awareness that these texts show situational as well as temporal variation.

Situational Variation

- **Genre conventions of dictionaries;**
- **Clues about situational variation in various citations.**

Temporal Variation

- Role of dictionaries and related authorities in the standardisation of English (landmark dates and events including 17th century dictionary makers leading to 18th century Johnson);
- Citations and sightings of animals likely to be rare in British Isles until the 19th century colonial conquest of Africa. Not "typical words";

- Scholars' choice of spellings reflecting loan origins;
- Animals now have iconic status as exotic creatures in writing for children (alphabet books, stories and so on);
- Degrees to which dictionary citations acknowledge current ideologies around ecology and conservation – special collocations for whips but not for ecological concerns.

QUESTION 4: Language Change – conventions to be identified and explained in comparable pages from 19th Century “textbooks” teaching about Science and Mathematics.

This question tests the ability of candidates to relate ideas about language change and about textual analysis to examples of a text-type with which they will be familiar (educational texts) in a relatively unfamiliar historical form. The conventions of early nineteenth century textbooks often included a dialogic form and the tenor was formal, even genteel, by the standards of current educational materials. The texts imply certain social preferences and assumptions that make it seem strange by comparison with contemporary practices. The texts include a focus on instructional purposes with elements concerned with interpersonal functions. There are plenty of patterns to find across the data sets. Candidates are expected to do this methodically and to relate linguistic features to the contextual factors underpinning them.

Graphology and Orthography

A small number of differences in graphological conventions;
Conventions relating to print technology;
Spelling, capitalisation and orthographic conventions.

Lexis

Neologisms, coinages, words now obsolete;
Lexis as it reflects technological development;
Field;
Influence of classical models.

Semantics/pragmatics

Politeness markers;
Address terms;
Tenor/footings – the social relationships implied by the interlocutor;
Cultural allusions and cultural and social expectations of the reader;
Issues of accessibility and comprehension;
The nature of authority.

Grammar

Grammatical and lexico-grammatical conventions which now seem quaint;
Elaborate grammatical devices to control meaning;
Ornate syntax suggesting formal classical models.

Discourse structure

Dialogic form (Socratic Dialogue);
Interpersonal features;
Representation of conversation;
Means by which topics are developed;
Framing and sequencing including the treatment of examples;
Narrative devices.

Assessment Objective 4

Assessment Objective 4 tests knowledge of ideas, methods and evidence from studies of language in use. In Language Change answers this will be evidenced by the theoretical and research frameworks the candidate is able to bring to bear on their analysis. The danger of such knowledge and understanding is that it is sometimes used without regard for the particular question and associated data. Examiners should seek to credit relevant knowledge as it applies to these texts and to the question.

Stronger answers in the 24-25 range will be informed by secure knowledge of ideas from language study. As a result of this they will tend to be more explicit and wide ranging in their coverage, more probing and explicit in their analysis and more cautious in the way in which they draw conclusions on the basis of limited evidence (due tentativeness).

Answers in the 12-24 range will show some of the qualities in the range above but coverage will be less secure and consistent. For example answers may be uneven, oversimplified or over-assertive in their coverage of some important material. Some answers in this range may show an informed but undiscerning and/or inflexible use of secondary research.

Answers in the 0-11 band will include relevant answers which demonstrate no more than weak subject knowledge and understanding, and answers that are more fundamentally flawed. **Deficit accounts and evaluative accounts of varieties of language as inferior** would suggest little understanding of the descriptive rich text interpretation that informs approaches based on language study principles and which is necessary to make sense of such data. Irrelevant answers may include those which give general chronological surveys of language development and can only be credited where coverage is appropriate to the question set.

Research coverage

Candidates are unlikely to have encountered materials of this precise type before. Credit should be given for relevant application of knowledge and understanding of the history of English Language as it relates to these texts (18th century developments), for an understanding of register in relation to temporal variation and for knowledge of some of the linguistic and social contexts. Credit system and analytical method for working with data.

Assessment Objective 5ii

Candidates will show awareness that these texts show situational as well as temporal variation.

Situational Variation

Mode factors: writing to be read out;

Issues of audiences for educational materials in relation to provision of education and literacy;

Nature of appeal to authority and to entertainment;

Likely to be the representation of the interests of an influential minority.

Temporal Variation

Implies social conventions and expectations which now seem unusual;

Reflects economic and scientific priorities of early 19th century;

Issues of gender, class and ethnicity;

Nature of the comparison with 21st century language (lexis, collocations, grammatical devices);

Comparisons with and reflections of 18th century linguistic standardisation project;

Evidence of the texts for the some diffusion of some circumscribed knowledge and power (to women and children).