



Student responses with examiner commentary

A-level English Language 7702

Paper 1: Language, the Individual and Society 7702/1

For teaching from September 2015

For assessment from June 2017

Introduction

This resource gives examples of marked student responses to questions from our A-level English Language specimen materials, with accompanying examiner commentaries illustrating why responses have been placed within particular levels of the mark scheme.

The responses in this resource all relate to Paper 1: Language, the Individual and Society. Please see the separate resources for examples of marked student responses from Paper 2.

Paper 1: Language, the Individual and Society (7702/1)

As detailed in the specification (4.1), the aim of the part of the subject content examined in this paper is to introduce students to language study, exploring textual variety and children's language development. This area of student introduces students to methods of language analysis to explore concepts of audience, purpose, genre, mode and representation. It also introduces students to the study of children's language development, exploring how children learn language and how they are able to understand and express themselves through language. The question paper examines students' knowledge across these areas.

In Section A (Textual variations and representation), students are presented with two texts, one contemporary and one older, linked by topic or theme. They answer a question requiring analysis of one text, a question requiring analysis of a second text, and a question requiring comparison of the two texts.

In Section B (Children's language development), students answer one question from a choice of two, with data provided for each which will focus on spoken, written or multimodal language.

Question 1:

Analyse how Text A uses language to create meanings and representations.

Assessment objectives covered:

AO1 (10 marks)

AO3 (15 marks)

Total marks available: 25

Student response

Text A is an online conversation among students on 'The Student Room'. The conversation is written, and the purpose is to tell stories of their driving experiences. This makes the purpose transactional as it's about giving information. Participant 1 named 'The Phelps' adds some interactional features into their post in order to engage others and find out about other drivers' experiences. The layout is similar to a social media site which adds a relaxed, casual feel to the posts; the participants write informally and use non-standard English to tell their stories. The lexical choices are simple and the language used is suitable for all participants – there is no lexical field of sophisticated driving language. As this is an online conversation there is a time delay, which means that each post is planned; there are no spelling mistakes which supports the fact that the writers have thought about their response. However, there are some grammatical mistakes but it is unclear whether this is due to the lack of planning or the lack of need to write formally.

The website itself is set out with lots of hyperlinks which make it interactive. On the right hand side of the page the links take you to other websites which share a common topic and some take you to other non-related topics. Along the top is a banner of hyperlinks which will take you around the website where you can explore the other pages available. The layout of this website is user friendly – it's simple to use and has a clear layout. The interactive features continue inside the post box, there are many options enabling you to 'like' on Facebook, 'tweet' about on Twitter, 'reply' to each post and 'follow' profiles on The Student Room. From the amount of hyperlinks and links with social media it is clear that the target audience of this website is designed for students hence the name 'The Student Room'.

The title of this page is 'Share your worst learner driving experience!' which is a declarative. The verb 'share' at the start makes the sentence an instruction; it comes across quite blunt and makes the title seem short and snappy. The exclamation mark at the end makes the article seem fun which encourages the reader to take part in the story telling. As the website is designed for

Comment [A1]: Identifies key characteristics of text and its context

Comment [A2]: Perhaps, but not entirely transactional

Comment [A3]: Acknowledges other functions but without exemplification

Comment [A4]: Comments on style and tone. AO3 Level 2 at the moment.

Comment [A5]: Some specific contextual factors are acknowledged, but not exemplified.

Comment [A6]: Not necessarily

Comment [A7]: So far, much of this comment is broadly accurate but not exemplified.

Comment [A8]: Describes nature of web page (Level 2 AO3)

Comment [A9]: Describes interactive features of web page (into Level 3 for AO3)

Comment [A10]: Relates context to potential audience.

Comment [A11]: Inaccurate labelling of sentence function

Comment [A12]: Identifies a verb and contradicts earlier error of labelling

Comment [A13]: Some sense of language and punctuation shaping tone of page

students a short snappy title will engage the reader more instead of a long lengthy 'would you like to share your worst learner driving experience' which readers may get bored and become **uninterested**. The adjective 'worst' pre-modifies the phrase 'learner driving experience' to give the readers an idea of what sort of stories to **tell**. The abstract noun 'experience' is normally associated with eventful past occurrences, which makes it more appealing to readers as they think they are going to read interesting, potentially horrifying **stories**.

Comment [A14]: Not a very helpful generalisation about audience and effects

Comment [A15]: Some analysis of word classes and modification of phrases (AO1 Level 3)

Comment [A16]: A solid attempt to explore language choice and their effects. Starts to draw together AO1 (word class types Level 3) with AO3 (Level 3)

The language is non-standard English; the colloquial terms used makes it more suited for the target **audience**. 'I wondered if you guys had any funny or horrific stories'. The **pronoun** 'guys' is used to address the whole audience both boys and girls, they speak in an **active** and it comes across like they are actually interested in each reader **personally**. The second person pronoun 'you' and 'your' are also used to address the **reader**, this is called synthetic personalisation and is used to create a relationship with **reader**. You would use the pronoun 'guys' to address people in your friendship group and that feel is being brought into this online chat, making it more appealing for people to write in as their know that their stories are for entertainment purposes only and they aren't going to be bullied to laughed **at**.

Comment [A17]: Could be clearer and better exemplified

Comment [A18]: Not a pronoun, but it is a term of address

Comment [A19]: ?

Comment [A20]: Not very fluent expression, but there is some awareness of address and the producer-receiver relationship

Comment [A21]: Pronouns and address are mentioned. A more sophisticated take on this would have helped it to Level 4 perhaps but this remains at Level 3 for AO3

Comment [A22]: This is not really the case as no synthetic relationship is really suggested through the pronouns.

Comment [A23]: Some sense of the context and tenor of the posts.

Comment [A24]: This is accurate labelling of sentence type, conjunction type and clauses. This is AO1 high Level 4 and some Level 5.

Comment [A25]: The AO3 does not match the language labelling for AO1 and the effects of these language choices are not clearly explained.

Comment [A26]: Still remains rather vague for AO3

Comment [A27]: No example given

Comment [A28]: A bit of a generalisation

The sentences are mainly simple with the occasional compound where coordinating conjunctions are used to justify expanding on the independent clause. 'So I passed my test a few months ago, but in the lead up to that I had two little mishaps on the road'. The coordinating conjunction 'but' is used here to connect the independent clauses 'So I passed my test a few months ago' and 'in the lead up to that I had two little mishaps on the **road**'. But by adding the second clause it makes the writer open up and give more information, perhaps making the reader want to do the same; it creates a **relationship**.

Overall, the article uses a range of language frameworks to engage and entertain the **reader**. The original post uses questions to engage the reader and to get thinking about their experiences. The language used creates chatty friendly feel which increases the number of participants as they know it's a bit of fun. Participants express their emotion through **emoticons**; again this adds that teenage feel making it fun to be **involved**. The website suits its target audience and the interational features for example hyperlinks and questions, this works well in order to get a response from the reader.

Examiner summary:

This answer offers some close analysis of parts of Text A but tends to be rather vague in its discussion of meanings and there is very little at all on representation. The balance of marks in this question (15 for AO3 and 10 for AO1) would suggest that a student should concentrate more on exploring what is discussed and how ideas are expressed than this response has done. Also, the student has focused quite narrowly on the language in the posts and not on the surrounding text and design. Students answering this question are encouraged to discuss the **whole** text rather than just some parts of it.

AO1: There is some identification of word classes (pronouns, adjectives), some word class types (conjunction types), sentence functions and some sentence and clause work in one section. There are errors in labelling but it is mostly accurate. The spread of achievement – solidly level 3, with some Level 4 and a touch of level 5 – would suggest a mark in Level 4.

AO3: This is much less secure and there are some quite large gaps in what this student has done. However, they do manage to talk about the audience, some of the address used in the text and some of the contextual characteristics of the webpage. What is missing is any real sense of how experiences are being expressed and how the posters feel. There is very little on the ways in which the web page itself represents a community (although there are some hints of this in the answer). This response probably ceilings at the low end of Level 3.

Question 2:

Analyse how Text B uses language to create meanings and representations.

Assessment objectives covered:

AO1 (10 marks)

AO3 (15 marks)

Total marks available: 25

Student response

Text B is a news article from 'The Western Times'. This indicates that the article is planned, formal and uses Standard English. The article is one paragraph, with a range of sentence structures, 'four, eight, and twelve miles an hour, and he was going less than his second speed'. Here the coordinating conjunction 'and' is used to give additional information to the independent clause which is 'To prove this, defendant said he had speeds on his machine – four, eight and twelve miles an hour.'

Comment [A29]: No real evidence suggested for this so far

Text B's main purpose is to inform the readers about a serious topic. The target audience for this article is older, mature people who read newspaper articles. The article uses a range of proper nouns to make the article informative which suits the target audience. To ensure the seriousness is maintain throughout the article, sophisticated terminology is used such as the verb 'summoned', the adverb 'furiously' and the noun 'defendant'. 'At the Exeter Police Court yesterday, Leonard Willey, electrical engineer, of 12, Oxford-road, Exeter, was summoned for furiously driving a motor-car down Forestreet on...' this is the first sentence of the article. It is long and contains many commas; this suggests that the writer's ability isn't sophisticated as they don't use any conjunctions to link the clauses together. Furthermore, each sentence is full of information; this supports the idea that the article is designed to inform the reader.

Comment [A30]: This is very unclear and the examples don't support the labels.

Comment [A31]: Some generalised comment on audience and purpose.

Comment [A32]: Eg?

Comment [A33]: Again, a rather broad assertion about audience

Comment [A34]: 3 words are labelled (AO1 Level 3) but there is very little sense of what they mean or why they have been used (beyond being 'sophisticated')

Comment [A35]: An unhelpful and inaccurate comment

Comment [A36]: General comments on function and purpose

Examiner summary:

This is a much weaker response than the same student's answer for question 1 and suggests a problem with timing across the paper. While the text is quite short, there is a range of material to talk about and explore. Once again, the lack of focus on meanings and representations is a major drawback here, and this time the brevity of the answer means that the AO1 is sketchy too.

AO1: Three words are labelled but there is little else to credit here. This is too thin to enter Level 3, so the best descriptor matching this is in Level 2: "refer(s) to elements of language that do not illuminate the analysis", so a mark in this band is appropriate.

AO3: There is very little engagement with meaning and only brief discussion of what the text broadly aims to do. The comments about audience and purpose remain very general and unsupported. It remains in Level 1.

Question 3:

Explore the similarities and differences in the ways that Text A and Text B use language.

Assessment objectives covered:
AO4 (20 marks)

Total marks available: 20

Student response

Text A and Text B share some of the same mode characteristics, for example being planned, written and permanent. As Text A's target audience is teenagers they need to use interactional language to maintain their interest and get them involved as the purpose of the article is to get other people's stories. Text A use more interactional features to interest the reader whereas Text B's main purpose is to inform the readers about a serious topic. To ensure the seriousness is maintain throughout the article sophisticated terminology is used such as the verb 'summoned', the adverb 'furiously' and the noun 'defendant'. Text A manages to keep the lively chatty feel to the conversation by using the pronoun 'guys' and emoticons. Text B doesn't use any interactive features, there's no synthetic personalisation unlike Text A which uses both of these features. This means that Text B doesn't engage the reader, so the article will only be read if the reader actually wants to. Unlike Text A that uses questions and synthetic personalisation. Text A uses simple sentences with a few conjunctions and so does Text B. Text B uses long sentences with lots of information and many proper nouns. This indicates that the writer has done research into the topic. There is no imagery in either of the articles which suggest that both articles have the purpose of factually informing people.

To conclude, Text A is designed for a teenage audience therefore the language used is less sophisticated and the context is fun and engaging. On the other hand Text B is from a newspaper article so the context is serious with the purpose to inform. Text B uses more proper nouns along with a semantic field of police and crime, the nouns which fit into the field are 'Police' 'Court' 'defendant' 'witness'. Both texts are well suited for their purpose and both use language effectively to suit their target audience.

Examiner summary:

The student makes an effort to compare the texts but only at a fairly literal level and often recycling material from questions 1 and 2. This is not necessarily a problem, but in this case the material doesn't help illuminate any discussion of what makes the texts different. The same material can be used differently in questions 1 and 2, but to achieve marks in AO4 on this question, you might expect a little more discussion of genre, purposes, audiences, modes and times.

Mode is a promising starting point for comparison, but the opportunity to look in detail at differences between written and electronic texts is missed. Some general points about interactivity are made but these are not supported. There are some differences noted in the audiences, but again only with some superficial comment.

One major element that is missing here is any acknowledgement that the texts come from different times. It is worth remembering that Paper 1 Questions 1-3 are the only place in the A-level that older texts feature on the question paper, so it's important to be able to consider time as one of the key factors influencing the similarities and differences between the texts.

Comment [A37]: Mode is introduced as a possible connection, but it's not securely explained.

Comment [A38]: Audience and interactive nature of text mentioned

Comment [A39]: Eg?

Comment [A40]: Compares functions and purposes (briefly)

Comment [A41]: This does not offer much and isn't really applicable for AO4 on this question.

Comment [A42]: Some contrast noted in styles but little discussion of what has created this or why it might be significant

Comment [A43]: Not a very illuminating comment

Comment [A44]: This is becoming quite note-like and needs to be more fluent, better exemplified and more detailed to offer AO4 focus beyond the lower bands.

Comment [A45]: Very vague

Comment [A46]: Some points about audience are made.

Comment [A47]: A very general point

Comment [A48]: Not very helpful points and no real link to meanings or differences between the texts.

As with this student's answers to Questions 1 and 2, there is little comment on how the texts handle the topic differently, so this again limits high levels of achievement.

As this answer remains brief and literal, it remains in Level 2.

Question 4:

“Interaction with caregivers is the most important influence on a child’s language development.”

Referring to Data Set 1 in detail, and to relevant ideas from language study, evaluate this view of children’s language development.

Assessment objectives covered:

AO1 (15 marks)

AO2 (15 marks)

Total marks available: 30

Please note that this student response is likely to be slightly lengthier than a student would be expected to achieve in timed exam conditions.

Student response

Interaction with caregivers is seen as vital part of a child’s general development; however, the importance of caregiver interaction on a child’s language acquisition is an issue that divides language theorists. Child directed speech is the way adults adapt their language and use different forms of language when talking to young children. Some see this as beneficial for a child’s pragmatic and grammatical development as the child is exposed to features of language such as humour and can imitate the parent’s speech. On the other hand, others such as language theorist Chomsky believe language acquisition is an innate ability and therefore place less importance on the role of the caregiver. Case studies, language concepts and language research as well as language acquisition theories are all essential when analysing the influence of caregivers on a child’s language development.

Data set 1 was recorded from a 3 year and 5 month old child named Joey. From Joey’s grammatically complete utterances such as “that’s my daddy’s books” and ability to form questions “what would you like today” we can see that he is in the post telegraphic stage of language development. The adult interacting with Joey uses open questions “what are we going to have today” which encourage a longer response from Joey, therefore he can begin to lead the conversation. Joey replies with “egg (.) I’ve got lots of eggs” whilst putting lego pieces into a toy saucepan. This as example of Michael Halliday’s imaginative sentence function as Joey is pretending to cook for the adult therefore implying that the adult’s interaction is important for developing Joey’s pragmatic awareness because he is using language for more complex functions such as role play. The adult also repeats what Joey says and uses

Comment [A49]: The student begins by offering direct focus on the question.

Comment [A50]: While there is a useful mention of CDS here, it’s not immediately clear how grammar development and imitation are relevant at this stage.

Comment [A51]: One of the main debates is introduced here, suggesting a good overview of the issues at stake. (AO2)

Comment [A52]: AO1 is foregrounded here and the use of examples from the data is good. The placement of Joey’s talk within a stage of development, with some grammatical terminology used to label the examples, is helpful.

Comment [A53]: Good AO1 here helps this towards Level 3

Comment [A54]: This links together an example and a wider point about Halliday’s functions of language. What’s also good is that this is directly linked to the issue of interaction. Level 3 AO2.

stressed syllables “it breaks”. This rising intonation is used to encourage Joey to clarify what he means by it “it breaks” and to develop his response.

Comment [A55]: This links to another language level – phonology – and suggests a wider understanding of different elements of CDS. It could be developed a little though.

The Fis phenomenon is a study conducted in 1960 that questions the effectiveness of child directed speech. A child says “This is my fis.”, the adult replies with “Your fis?” to which the child replies “No, my fis”. This could show that the child realises they are mispronouncing the word “fish” incorrectly and so becomes frustrated when the adult also uses the non-standard adaptation “fis”. As this could prove that children can understand more words that they can physically say due to a lack of phonetical development, child directed speech could be seen as unnecessary and instead adults should provide a standard model of speech for a child to copy. Data set 1 displays this imitation when the adult tries to correct Joey by saying “no (.) not crawns (.) prawns” and Joey replies “crawns (.) you said crawns” therefore showing that the child could believe he is using the standard pronunciation like the adult.

Comment [A56]: This case study is relevant, but could perhaps be evaluated more effectively.

Comment [A57]: This is a possible interpretation of the Fis case study.

Comment [A58]: This isn't as clear as it might be. While there's focus on examples and an attempt to link them to case studies, the overall impression is a little vague.

On the other hand, the study of a boy named Jim who had two deaf parents could demonstrate a need for caregiver interaction. Jim received little interaction with speaking adults but was given access to a television. His speech was severely undeveloped therefore suggesting social interaction is needed for language to develop rather than simply being exposed to language. Vygotsky's socio-cultural theory also suggests that social interaction is important in aiding language development. In particular Vygotsky's idea of the zone of proximal development states that a child needs a caregiver's support to help them acquire language. Children need this scaffolding less as they become more able to deal with different social and cultural situations on their own. This implies that the level of a caregiver's language should be pitched at just above the level of development of speech the child can use without help in order to encourage further language development.

Comment [A59]: It would be useful to properly reference studies such as this and 'Fis'.

Comment [A60]: Another case study is mentioned. AO2 Level 3.

Comment [A61]: A theory is related to the idea of interaction, but again this could be taken further with some examples.

Comment [A62]: This hasn't really been explained.

Comment [A63]: The idea of the ZPD is interesting and relevant to interaction, but examples could have been used here.

Skinner's behaviourist theory states that children are born as a “blank canvas” therefore children learn words from their environment and repeat phrases they have heard from their caregiver. This could explain why Joey says “What woud you like today (.) sir” in data set 1 as Joey is using more formal lexis such as “sir” which he could have imitated from adult speech. However, the behaviourist theory doesn't explain why children use words they haven't heard before and is criticized for being too simplistic.

Comment [A64]: Possible imitation/echoing of adult speech. AO2 Level 3.

Comment [A65]: Some attempt to evaluate behaviourism but it's rather brief.

Chomsky's nativist theory is based on the belief that children are born with the capability of acquiring language with less emphasis being put on the child's environment. The nativist theory could explain why children often

make virtuous errors such as overgeneralisation. For example a child could say “foots” instead of “feet”. The child is unlikely to have heard an adult use the word “foots” and so it could show the child has tried to use the plural rule of adding an “s” onto a noun to an irregular noun and has made a virtuous error. Similarly in data set 1 Joey uses the word “saucy pan” this is an example of affixation as he added a “y” onto the word “sauce”. This shows that Joey is actively using language rather than simply copying the adult. This could lessen the importance of caregiver language used as a model of speech for children to imitate.

In contrast, Bruner’s social interactionist theory suggests that children need a language acquisition support system for language to develop. This involves caregivers providing ritualised scenarios such as the cooking role play game seen in data set 1 to encourage the child to be an active participant in the conversation. Another important idea from Bruner’s theory is that children have to experience language within a recognisable context to understand it which could explain why Jim could not develop language normally by only listening to the radio and television.

However, in some cultures such as communities in Papua New Guinea parents do not adapt their speech when talking to young children and instead use standard language. The children of these communities acquire language at the same rate as children who are exposed to caregiver interaction. This could suggest that child directed speech is unnecessary. Despite conflict over the importance of caregiver interaction on a child’s language acquisition, child directed speech can help build relationships between caregiver and child. It can also help to develop a child’s pragmatic awareness and introduce them to new social situations which is arguably just as important as a child’s language development.

Examiner summary:

Overall, this is a focused response that offers attention to the question, some relevant focus on the data and some discussion of alternative explanations and theoretical positions. The data is used as a starting point but is not utilised as fully as it could have been, and this means that the focus is a little restricted. The structure of the response is fairly sound, with some evaluation and a developing line of argument, but some observations are not concluded and there is no overview to pull the different strands together at the end.

AO1: some good examples are used and there are references to different levels of language (phonology, syntax, morphology and pragmatics). Some accurate labelling of nouns, clause functions and phonological features is evident, along with evidence of understanding of regular and irregular patterns. This is mostly in Level 3 with some elements of 4 and some range (from Level 5) so would probably be at the lower end of Level 4.

Comment [A66]: Chomsky and nativism is referenced. Examples are used and an alternative interpretation is offered. This is starting to move into Level 4 AO2.

Comment [A67]: AO1 is secure here and some good references to word classes and regular/irregular forms are made.

Comment [A68]: This introduces the idea of derivational morphology, widening the focus of the response to another level of language. Different levels of language are in AO1 Level 5.

Comment [A69]: This point is not clearly explained, so the evaluation is left hanging.

Comment [A70]: A different theory is applied and an apposite example selected.

Comment [A71]: While this is possibly true, it doesn’t offer a very cohesive link to an earlier point.

Comment [A72]: Some evaluation of cultural differences.

Comment [A73]: Returns to the question and offers some evaluation of different ideas.

Comment [A74]: These wider dimensions are useful to mention, but are not developed in this response.

AO2: interaction is discussed from the beginning and there is some knowledge of the LASS, ZPD, case studies about *Jim* (Devilliers & Devilliers) and *Fis* (Berko & Brown), along with mention of Chomsky and Skinner. There is some attempt made to evaluate different theories and explain their relevance to the data, so this moves beyond Level 3 into the middle of Level 4.

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good understanding of different models and theories • Some evaluation of different ideas • Close focus on question from beginning • Linguistic description of examples across different language levels • Examples from the data are discussed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More evaluation of different models would have helped • Greater reference to other examples from the data could have expanded the focus of the answer • More attention to the features and characteristics of Child-Directed Speech (CDS) would have allowed this to move into a higher AO2 band • More focus on the context of the interaction could have opened up discussion of social interaction as a means of developing pragmatic awareness, turn-taking, co-operation etc.

Question 5:

“Accuracy is more important than creativity.”

Referring to Data Set 2 and Data Set 3 in detail, and to relevant ideas from language study, evaluate this view of children’s language development.

Assessment objectives covered:

AO1 (15 marks)

AO2 (15 marks)

Total marks available: 30

Please note that this student response is likely to be slightly lengthier than a student would be expected to achieve in timed exam conditions.

Student response

There are two approaches that argue how children learn to read and write. The Traditional Approach (Linear Model) suggests that writing follows reading and is learnt in a continuum of identifiable sequential stages – Reading, Writing, Spelling and Genre Awareness - whilst the Developmental Model (Functional Approach) argues that there are no linear stages and that children learn about writing before being able to do it by seeing written modes in the form of calendars, posters and festive cards. They believe that writing is learnt simultaneously with reading or even before.

The Traditional model would suggest that accuracy is more important than creativity as it is accuracy which will move a child up each learning stage. But is accuracy more important than creativity?

The Early Writing Stages consist of: Scribbling, Emergent Writing, Copying and Independent Writing. During the first two stages, accuracy isn’t pushed. Here children are encouraged to be creative by making marks on paper and some recognisable shapes. The Copying stage is where children copy shapes and letters and have no decisions in what they decide to draw/write; the Independent Writing stage combines both accuracy and creativity together in order for them to progress. By having the Copying stage before the Independent Writing stage suggests that this theory believes that learning the basics of writing is more important than being able to write independently/creatively.

Kroll’s theory in 1981 supports the linear model, and he developed the Early Writing Stages into: Preparation, Consolidation, Differentiation and Integration. Kroll’s preparation stage encourages children to make marks on paper whilst they learn how to hold a pen. This leads to copying which increases the accuracy of the formation of letters but decreases the creativity of the work. The Consolidation stage is creative; it occurs during the first few years at school, where they do independent writing which reflects spoken language so there will be phonetic spelling and chaotic punctuation. This stage doesn’t produce accurate work but allows for the child to be creative moving them onto the Differentiation stage where they will learn how to write sophisticatedly with the correct punctuation.

Shirley Brice Heath disagrees with Kroll’s theory and supports the Developmental Model. She researched the different ways that children are exposed to literacy to see whether this

Comment [75]: Two models of development are offered right from the start, allowing the student to evaluate the positions later in the answer.

Comment [76]: This offers direct focus on the terms of the question, but is this comment necessarily true?

Comment [77]: Early stages of development are considered and focus on the question offered. Knowledge of linguistic ideas is being shown here (Level 3 in AO2)

Comment [78]: This is an attempt to focus on the terms of the question and to assess the value of the traditional model, but there is perhaps some misunderstanding evident in the assertion that the model places one stage in front of another.

Comment [79]: Again, there is knowledge of theories and models here (AO2 Level 3) but an assumption that theories ‘encourage’ children’s development when they are attempts to explain development.

Comment [80]: Ideas about accuracy in spelling and punctuation are introduced here (but with no examples to illustrate) and it’s not entirely clear how ‘creativity’ is actually being defined.

Comment [81]: This isn’t explained fully or justified but offers an outline of an alternative approach.

had any effect on their literacy ability before they went to school. Heath went to three socially different towns in America and looked at children's interaction with literacy. Her results showed that the 'Maintown' (which consisted of white middle class) children were better at writing because literacy was encouraged – they read for fun, whereas in 'Trackton' (which was black working class people), reading wasn't encouraged unless for educational purposes and that they used a lot of oral narratives. Her third town, 'Roadville' which was predominantly white and working class, only used books for education purposes rather than part of their everyday life unlike those in Maintown. From her findings, it is clear that social and historical factors influence children's literacy practices. According to Shirley Brice Heath's study, the importance of accuracy over creativity differs depending on where you are. For those in Maintown, accuracy would be far more important than creativity as for them it's all about being the most educated, the most sophisticated in order to get the best well paid job, as for them money is power. Whereas on the other hand, for those in Trackton you could argue that creativity is more important as they use oral narratives to tell stories and entertain one another, so the more creative the better.

Comment [82]: While the references to Brice Heath are useful in outlining another view of literacy, the conclusions are rather generalised and simplistic.

Marie Clay is a theorist who supports the Developmental Model. She came up with a set of stages that aren't linear but believes children go through a variety of these methods when learning write, they are: Copying Principle, Directional Principle, Inventory Principle, Space Principle and Message Concepts. All these ideas focus on making children's writing correct. Unlike Kroll's theory and the Early Stages of Writing, Clay doesn't have an Independent writing stage which suggests that she doesn't believe creativity will help a child to learn how to write.

Comment [83]: These ideas aren't presented clearly enough and there is some misunderstanding about how they relate to the models explained at the start.

The data from set 2 shows that the child has understood and can apply the technical aspects to writing, for example they have written in horizontal lines, from left to right. They have used the correct sizing and formation of letters and this is consistent throughout the data and their spacing is regular except from one occurrence where there is no space between 'of' and 'course'. This is called a gestalt spelling – where the child spells two words as one because they are frequently said one after the other without pause. Within this data, it's mainly the spelling mistakes which reduce the accuracy of this data.

Comment [84]: This is a misrepresentation of Clay's work.

Comment [85]: This is the first reference to the data, so the first opportunity to credit AO1, describing features of orthography (Level 3)

There are five different types of spelling mistakes; they are: Substitution, Omission, Insertion, Transposition and Graphemic Substitution. Substitution is when you swap one letter for another. Omission is when you miss out unstressed sounds. Insertion is when you add extra letters. Transposition is when you get letters the wrong way round. Graphemic Substitution is when you replace a combination of letters with another combination.

Comment [86]: A specific example is quoted.

Comment [87]: Some reference is made to the question and spelling is highlighted as an area of importance for accuracy.

In data set 2, the child misspells the adverb 'there' as 'theire' which is an example of insertion as they have added the extra 'i'. However, as the reader you assume that the child meant to write 'there'. This is an example where accuracy is important, as you cannot tell whether the child has learnt the difference between the three homophones 'there' 'their' and 'they're' which makes it difficult to assess what level the child is at. The child also misspells the adjective normal as 'normle'; here the child uses omission to replace 'al' for 'le'. The child also uses a range of sentence structures. '...and ofcourse not forgetting....or so they thought' which is an example of a complex sentence due to the sub-coordinating

Comment [88]: This moves into more detail on spelling patterns but sounds pre-prepared. References to the data in the question would be much more helpful here.

Comment [89]: This is a reasonable point about accuracy and intelligibility and draws on the data to discuss ideas (AO2 Level 3).

conjunction 'or' which links the two clauses together '...ofcourse not forgetting' and 'so they thought'. This shows sophistication and a high writing level.

Compared to data set 2, data set 3 is a lot less accurate but more creative. In data set 3 the child uses his imagination to make this story about a time machine taking them to a desert island where he found lots of amazing animals. This type of story is much more creative than the child in data set 2 who just described her family. However, even though it's more creative it is less accurate, but you can still understand what the child is trying to say. But is this because as the reader I fill in the missing gaps with what I assume should be there. Here, the child has shown a basic understanding of the technical features of writing i.e they write in horizontal lines, left to right which makes it easy to understand. The child uses irregular spacing and letter formation but because they have followed the horizontal line (left to right) rule, it is still readable. You could argue that a degree of accuracy is important so you can understand what the child is trying to say but so is creativity as it is a chance for children to express their individuality. This supports Lev Vygotsky's theory, who explored the connection between language and thought. He claimed inner thought is a condensed form of language which children struggle to write down. However when they do learn to be write it down, it gives them a chance to express themselves how they want. The child in data set 3 makes lots of spelling mistakes. He misspells 'took' for 'tooc' in the sentence 'I had a time machine it tooc' this is substitution of 'k' to 'c', which could be because these two consonants sound the same. However this sentence also shows that the child is able to spell longer complex words such as 'machine'. He also misspells 'carrying' for 'carine' in the sentence 'we sor sim men ther carine cass' this is an example of Graphemic Substitution, he swaps 'rying' for 'rine' omission of unstressed symbols could have influenced his spelling here. The child frequently makes the mistake of using the wrong first person pronoun, 'it tooc my too a desert' 'Jimay was with my.' 'My and Jimay went to the river'. Irregular capitalisation also occurs throughout this data, 'It was very Hot.' The child puts a capital 'H' on hot even though it's in a middle of a sentence. However, like data set 2 this child also manages to split its story into sentences with the correct punctuation by having a capital letter at the start and a full stop at the end. This accuracy makes it easier for it to be read and shows a level of intelligence as they know the basics of writing accurately. The child uses simple sentences with one clause; they don't use any conjunctions and start a new sentence every time something a different action occurs. This shows a low level of sophistication and writing ability.

To conclude, I think that the theorists mentioned and those not mentioned such as Frith, Britton and Rothery focus on accuracy as being important when learning to write. But I think that this is because you can't teach a child to be creative or imaginative, you can only give them the opportunity to. Theorists like Kroll and the Early Writing Stages support the linear model and allocate a stage to independent writing which suggests that they do feel creativity will develop a child's writing ability. I feel that by having the opportunity to write by yourself and not copying means you can put what you've learnt into practice and then learn from your mistakes as there are so many irregular rules that cannot be learnt in a classroom. Accuracy is important, you can't deny it. Without accuracy you wouldn't be able

Comment [90]: The student attempts to engage in more detail with the data but is hit and miss in her accuracy. 'Or' is a co-ordinating conjunction, so the sentence is not complex. The mis-spelling of 'normle' is more likely to be linked to the range of different ways in which the same sound is spelt, rather than an omission.

Comment [91]: This addresses a different form of creativity: the use of the imagination (AO2 Level 4 perhaps).

Comment [92]: The student starts to discuss the significance of accuracy in different contexts.

Comment [93]: Some comments on spacing and letter formation in the data help secure this in AO1 Level 3

Comment [94]: Addresses question and offers own view.

Comment [95]: Some sustained references to the data but not a great deal of development from previous points.

Comment [96]: Sentences and punctuation. Level; 3 AO1

Comment [97]: Examples would help clarify these points.

Comment [98]: Not a very helpful way to mention other theories and models.

to understand what has been written but it is creativity that has enabled writing to have many different purposes.

Comment [99]: This is an interesting way to finish but it might have been better to start with this idea.

Examiner summary:

This is a serious attempt to answer the question and there is evidence of some knowledge of the topic. The student attempts to bring together different models, sometimes offering relevant discussion of how children’s literacy develops. The answer takes a while to draw in the data and could have made better use of the material, drawing on a wider range of areas, such as semantics and the teacher’s corrections and comments.

AO1: this is securely within Level 3. There is discussion of orthography, punctuation, some word classes and sentences, but not always accurately.

AO2: the student works largely with Level 3 here, showing detailed knowledge of some concepts and theories, but less developed understanding of other areas. It goes into Level 4 when she starts to consider imagination and creativity and begins to define her terms more clearly, but does not go very high in the band as there is not a very wide range of points and only 1 descriptor (of a possible 5) is met.

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Knowledge of theories, models and stages of development• Reference to spellings, spacing and lineation• Some discussion of the importance of accuracy• Discussion of some examples with linguistic analysis	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Undeveloped discussion and misunderstanding of some models• No real overview or evaluation of different models• A lack of definition of terms at the start of the answer• A limited range of references to interaction with the teacher• A narrow focus on language levels; more coverage of areas such as semantics, genre and pictures would have helped

Version 3.0
First published 11/02/2015
Last updated 20/02/2015