Examiners' Report
Principal Examiner Feedback

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Pearson Edexcel International Advanced Subsidiary and International Advanced Level In English Language (WEN02)
Paper 01

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Introduction

The purpose of this report is to provide centres with an insight into the assessment process and give an overview of how candidates approached each question.

Candidates performed well overall, engaged with the data and demonstrated their subject knowledge in their responses. Candidates' approach to their analysis demonstrated some understanding of the requirements of each question. However, there was evidence that their responses lacked the refinement of exam technique and in-depth analysis required for top level marks, reflecting that some candidates may not have been sufficiently for the exam. This was most apparent in question 2 where a lot of candidates underperformed and lacked understanding of what the criteria of the question. Overall, the majority of the candidates scored within level 2 and 3 with a minority achieving marks in level 4.

The paper is divided into two sections providing an opportunity for a comparative analysis in Section A and a discussion-based essay in Section B. Candidates are invited to analyse three texts representative of the spoken and written modes of language. Each section contains one question worth 25 marks each. Candidates must answer both questions.

It is recommended that candidates should read through both questions, as well as the extracts in the source booklet, before beginning their written response. This will allow them to gain an understanding of the discussion points within the paper and note connections across the texts before they begin.

Section A: Spoken Language Today This section provides an unseen piece of spoken language from the 21st century which is a variety of English. Question 1 engages candidates in an analysis of the development of this variety in relation to Standard English. In this series the spoken language was an example of Bahamian English.

Section B: Written Language of the 19th -21st Century Candidates answer one discussion question on two written texts in the Source Booklet that look at the issue raised in Section A from a wider perspective. This series, the two extracts featured were an extract blog post published on a tourism website for Nassau Paradise Island in 2019 and an extract from Dance Songs and Tales from the Bahamas published in 1930. Candidates were asked to discuss how this variety of English in the Bahamas reflects the changes to and development of English across the world.

Section A

Some candidates performed well on this question demonstrating confident and consistent use of terminology to illustrate their points.
The majority of candidates commented on the full range of language levels showing an understanding of the question requirements and made attempts to apply theories. However, there were a few responses that were generally descriptive and focused only on identifying features with little to no analysis.

Candidates produced a variety of responses ranging from detailed and wide ranging to some brief one-page answers. There were a few candidates who did not attempt the question or wrote very little rewardable material demonstrating they were unprepared for the demands of the exam. A few candidates simply listed the features and made no attempt to discuss them. Stronger candidates attempted to analyse the features present within the data, linking to theories and identifying the connections to standard varieties of English. The most common theories and concepts applied to the data were, covert/overt prestige and accommodation theory.

Candidates scoring within the higher levels covered a range features including grammatical, phonological and lexical features using sophisticated terminology and explanations of non-standard features linking to other varieties of English. They provided lots of examples and made links to the discourse and contextual factors. There was some reference to theories of language change, such as Kachru's Circle in the higher levels which demonstrated an understanding of the development of varieties of English.

Level 2 and 3 candidates tended to lack the range of features in their analysis which is required for the higher bands and may have limited discussion on theories or discourse. Level 2 were able to identify the phonological variations and discussed lexical features that were influenced by American culture as well as Bahamian lexis 'bui' to describe the merging of language. Level 3 candidates moved beyond these features to explain grammatical constructions such as non-standard verb tenses and other non-standard features linking to dialects, creole varieties and discussing divergence from standard forms.

Section B

Candidates performed at a lower standard to section A demonstrating an imbalance in marks awarded across the paper. Candidates ~~are expected to~~ refer to all three data sets to answer this question and this is becoming common practice across the series. ~~Candidates are continuing to refer to all three sources in their responses to provide a discussion regarding the developments of Bahamian English.~~

As with section A there were some weak responses which were awarded in Level 1 and low level 2 whereby the candidate employed a largely descriptive approach. This involved detailing the contents of the extracts and not engaging in any analysis or highlighting any features.

There were scores within the level 3 and 4 where the highest responses focused on all bullet points, referred to the source texts, applied theories and built their answer around the development of Global English with reference to features present in Bahamian English. There were some perceptive comments regarding cultural identity and the stigmatisation of non-standard varieties explored within the analysis of Text A linking to accommodation theory and covert/overt prestige as well. Strong candidates also showed an understanding of events which impacted the spread of English such as immigration and colonisation.

Middle level responses tended to address all three bullet points but focused on one which limited them. They may also make excellent points using their own examples of language but at times lapsed into some description of what was there making their response uneven. application.

Upper level 2 responses applied a general analysis recognising how varieties of English have spread and with links to media and technology. They tended to address one or two bullet points in little detail. They quoted some examples from text but may focus on only piece of data. Some candidates engaged in a lot of summary from the data and were unable to draw their own conclusions, focusing solely on the information in the texts.

Paper Summary

Based on their performance on this paper candidates are offered the following advice:

- Employ effective time management in the examination to ensure that appropriate time is spent on each question in relation to the assessment objectives.
- Read all three sets of data before attempting the question to gain an understanding of the discussion points across the paper.
- Use terminology throughout your response in both questions.
- Ensure you refer to the sources in both questions and support your points with evidence from the texts.
- In Q2 consider all three texts in your discussion. Do not limit your response to one set of data or to one discussion point.
- In Q2 do not summarise and copy large sections of the data. Candidates are required to reference it and identify the transition of language with examples.
- Use the bullet points as a scaffold when writing your response to make sure all parts of the question are addressed and you have the opportunity to achieve full marks.
- Familiarise candidates with the exam format.

Grade Boundaries

Grade boundaries for this, and all other papers, can be found on the website on this link:
http://www.edexcel.com/iwantto/Pages/grade-boundaries.aspx