

ENGLISH LANGUAGE

Paper 9093/12
Reading

Key messages

- Candidates need to ensure that they prepare by reading widely from a diverse range of sources, such as advertisements, brochures, leaflets, editorials, news stories, articles, reviews, blogs, investigative journalism, letters, podcasts, (auto)biographies, travel writing, diaries, essays, scripted speech, narrative writing, and descriptive writing.
- Candidates need to demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the linguistic elements and features of texts such as parts of speech/word classes, vocabulary, figurative language, phonology, morphology, rhetorical devices, voice, aspect, tense, modality, narrative perspective, word ordering and sentence structure, paragraph- and text-level structure, formality/informality of tone, and pragmatics.
- Candidates should develop an intimate knowledge and understanding of the conventions and discourses associated with a diverse range of genres, styles and contexts, enabling them to respond reflectively, analytically, discursively and creatively, as appropriate to the task or context.
- For **Question 1(a)** the accompanying instructions and text provide the context and background information to guide the candidates as they produce their directed response. Candidates should use these to make carefully considered choices of appropriate lexis, register and tone to suit the task set and ensure they achieve the highest possible standards of accuracy and expression in their writing.
- For **Question 1(b)** candidates need to ensure that they compare the form, structure and language of the original text and their own, with a clear emphasis on selecting elements from both texts that can be analysed to demonstrate how writers' stylistic choices relate to audience and shape meaning.
- For **Question 2** candidates need to comment on the form, structure and language of a text. They are required to identify characteristic features of the text, relate them to the meaning, context and audience of the writing, organise information in their answers and write using clear and appropriate language.
- A secure degree of technical accuracy – especially in the use of spelling, punctuation and tenses – is required at this level.

General comments

The selected texts for this paper offered different genre, style and context. Candidates accessed both texts well and demonstrated engagement to varying degrees. The rubric was generally understood, with only a few candidates omitting either a part of a question or a full question. There were some overlong responses to **Question 1(a)**. Candidates are required to write between 150 and 200 words. While there is no direct penalty for failing to adhere to this requirement, this is an aspect of the response's relevance to purpose. Candidates should remember that they are being marked for task focus and relevant content as well as expression and accuracy. Largely speaking, the paper was handled with understanding and competence. Only a few responses demonstrated a lack of the necessary language skills for text analysis.

Question 1(a) is a directed response task. Candidates need to follow the instructions carefully to produce a written response informed by the language, style and structure to fit a specific form, purpose and audience – in this session the original text was an article. Their reworking (or recasting) of the original text should incorporate recognisable conventions of the text type identified in the instructions; in this session it was a blog post (150–200 words). Careful consideration of the target audience is required. Candidates are expected to write clearly and accurately, with relevant content, and effectively for the prescribed purpose and audience.

A good working knowledge of linguistics is indispensable in responding to **Question 1(b)**, where candidates are required to compare the text produced for **1(a)** with the given text, analysing form, structure and language. Here, candidates are assessed for their ability to demonstrate comparative understanding of texts, with clear reference to characteristic features and comparative analysis of form, structure and language and how a writer's stylistic choices relate to audience to shape meaning. It is very important that candidates employ some form of comparative approach in their response to **Question 1(b)**. A topical approach guarantees continuous comparison in which a conclusion can be used to emphasise the essential similarities and differences between the two texts. Those who adopted a topical approach tended to be the candidates who demonstrated the most comprehensive understanding of linguistic elements. It is important to recognise that candidates are not asked to write a reflective commentary, which is a requirement for Paper 2 and not the approach that is required for **Question 1(b)** in Paper 1.

In **Question 2**, a sound knowledge of linguistics is again required as candidates are assessed on their ability to demonstrate understanding of a text in terms of meaning, context and audience with reference to characteristic features, and their analysis of form, structure and language.

Specific language features were generally well understood, but candidates must ensure that the features they identify are genuinely present in the passage and that they use specific examples of language use to support the identification of those features and link them to effects created. Most candidates clearly understood the need to make precise connections between language features and their contribution to the full effect of the passage. There was also attention to the effects of punctuation, especially dashes and commas.

In the case of most candidates, there was a clear understanding of the need to make precise connections between language features and their contribution to the full effect of the given text.

Less successful responses could often have been improved through more precise use of language to link evidence with explanatory comments; general descriptive phrases such as 'the writer is trying to persuade the reader' and 'this helps the readers to imagine' cannot be considered useful text analysis. This session, only a few candidates seemed to struggle to manage their time appropriately, consequently often failing to complete their last response.

Comments on specific questions

Question 1

- (a) Candidates were asked to read an article promoting 'forest bathing' from *National Geographic* website. They were required to write a blog post describing their experience and the benefits of forest bathing.

Responses to this question often gave some sharp pictures of 'tech-boom burnout' and there were some lyrical accounts of the effects of forest bathing; a few successful responses dismissed forest bathing as complete nonsense. Some candidates gave their blog post a school or other context, expressing the need for a break from the 'stresses of it all'. These points were used for comparative analysis in **Q1(b)**.

Some responses were humorous and showed a courtesy to their audience and were a pleasure to read. There was generally a good understanding of blog post conventions.

In effective responses, tenses were clear and consistent, lifted material did not dominate and there was a credible sense of a blog post. These responses included blog post conventions more obviously, such as a building a relationship with the audience, showing passion about their subject or experience, were personal and reached out to the audience, and some began very emphatically and effectively, for example with a title often using a rhetorical question. These effective responses sometimes offered a reflective approach, represented a personal journey, showed a shift(s) in time and, within the word guidance, offered a cyclical approach. There was appropriate use of a first-person conversational, reflective, thoughtful tone, together with listing, use of parenthesis and repetition. Most importantly, these responses often concentrated on one setting and included a description of the writer's experience together with articulation of the benefits (as required by the question) of forest bathing.

Limited responses showed a tendency to lose the specifics of the passage and in some cases the context of the response was not made clear; these responses often heavily adopted the characteristic features of an advert rather than a blog post. Some candidates attempted to include all the locations in the given text. Where this was the case, it was clear that candidates had limited control of content and ideas, as they tried to incorporate most of the content from the given passage within the word guidance. Furthermore, these weaker responses often showed errors with use of grammar and incorrect tenses – frequently as a result of being over ambitious with language choices. Several of these weaker responses lifted phrases – such as *immersed in nature*, *wilderness lover* and *natural immunity boost* – or they quoted large amounts from the given text, which was rarely justified. Some responses that sited their forest bathing in a different location often neglected to import some of the benefits mentioned in the given text, thereby including too few ideas.

The need for careful reading of the question was highlighted by a number of responses that did not address what they were required to. Candidates need to reflect on the issues in the passage rather than introduce completely new material such as extensive information on ‘holiday experience’ or extended content on, for example, technologies and ecotherapy.

Striking a balance between showing understanding of the passage and crafting an effective response is key to this question and the tendency was perhaps to be a little too safe. It is important for candidates to be aware that understanding is not necessarily demonstrated by rearranging chunks of the text. Often, the most effective writing came at the end of responses when candidates freed themselves from ‘checklisting’ the text.

Most of the candidates abided by the guidelines concerning the length of their responses (150–200 words). However, this series a greater proportion of candidates wrote considerably longer pieces that therefore did not best suit the form and purpose specified, and this compromised the marks awarded for AO2.

(b) Candidates were asked to compare their blog post with the article, analysing form, structure and language.

To do well in this task, candidates need to analyse form, structure and language and to directly compare different approaches and features in the two texts available to them, i.e. the text given and the one that they have just created. An integrated approach is more effective for this type of comparative task than dealing with each text separately. Where textual evidence is selected, candidates should remember to offer clear analysis of how the writers’ choices of form, structure and language are related to audience and shape meaning.

Most candidates wrote effective introductory paragraphs, showing their understanding of both texts and their purpose and audience. They showed understanding of the difference in terms of the purpose of the article and the blog and elaborated on this. Almost all responses addressed the clear differences of first- and second-person address and showed recognition of the formality and neutrality of the article. In addition to this, common features mentioned were the use of voice, personal pronouns and direct address, and the distinguished differences and similarities between the two texts in terms of how this was appropriate to their purposes. Those who had clearly used the blog form effectively in **Q1(a)** had a firm basis and greater range of material on which to comment.

Limited responses were often brief, focused more on the article than on the candidate’s own directed response, and tended to summarise content rather than to analyse comparatively. These responses generally focused on one or two elements of form, structure or language. Some candidates mainly listed the conventions of an article or a blog post. Some merely pointed out the variety of sentence types or length of paragraphs without any reference to effect. Candidates should be advised that although they are not required to focus on form, structure and language in separate sections and they should organise their response in any appropriate way, responses that address all the elements are generally more successful.

Clear responses compared the two texts throughout and referred accurately to specific techniques used in both texts, quoting them clearly and explaining the precise effects they created. Occasionally, these responses were prevented from achieving more highly by a little generalisation such as, ‘make sure the reader understands and is able to picture what the text is about,’ or, ‘the targeted audience is everyone’. Generally, there was precise consideration of the impact of

individual examples of both writers' stylistic choices upon the reader. Responses such as these often fell into a clear pattern of identifying a technique, giving an example and describing the subsequent effect of its use as well as highlighting the broader effect in the passage. These answers also related the tone and purpose to precise features of the writing, showing understanding that language use creates tone, rather than relying on a broad identification of tone unconnected to language use.

In detailed and sophisticated responses, candidates made use of their linguistic knowledge to structure their writing, for example by proceeding from a line-by-line approach to whole text-level in their analysis. They correctly identified pertinent elements of form – i.e. the typical text conventions used in the original article and the candidate's own blog post – and the ways in which the different purposes affected the content and style of the two texts. They also commented successfully on the ways in which the article extract and the blog post were relevant to their respective intended audiences, e.g. through the tone and register used in each text. These responses offered an integrated comparison of these elements with their own writing.

In terms of language, these stronger responses referred to the use of details from the given text as a basis for their comparison: the use of direct address to the reader; inclusive first person plural narrative voice/point of view; factual information about forest bathing and each of the highlighted locations (for example, *2000 miles of hiking trails*); lexical fields of health (*antioxidants, vitamin C, essential oils, mindfulness*), forests (*evergreens, balsam, pine, fall foliage, rainforest, Kauri, cedars*), and environments (*Rift Valley, safari, remote island location, Arenal Volcano, Lake Placid, hiking trails*); vocabulary choices to enhance how beneficial the practice can be in such places (*paradise, sensory immersion, ample room, rich in, award-winning, protected forest reserve*); language of reassurance about safety (*certified forest therapy guides*); the *Local Tips* section; and in particular alliteration (*living legends, fall foliage*).

The very weakest responses offered no comparison, and a very few only focused on the given text.

Question 2

Candidates were asked to read a review of a memoir. They were required to analyse the text, focusing on form, structure and language.

The text was generally well understood and was answered with obvious engagement by most candidates. There was wide range of responses, with a significant number showing sophisticated understanding and analysis. Language features, especially the use of triads and puns, were well understood, and there was often perceptive understanding of the structure of the passage designed to create interest in *Soundings*. The parallels drawn between human and whale behaviour were well recognised and there was often a particularly strong and confident conclusion echoing the strength and drama of the text's final paragraph. The reservations about the project which are suggested by *catapult her further into debt* and *at times the narrator seems fixated* were generally passed over.

Stronger responses were aware of the characteristic features of a review. Most seemed to appreciate its purpose being to help the audience decide whether to read the book under review, and they wrote effectively about language and other features.

Detailed responses commented on the use of lexical fields/vocabulary concerned with water and creatures living in it (*sperm whales in the Sargasso and Caribbean seas, 'allomothers', caring for the calf at the water's surface, Pods, human as well as cetacean, travel up the Pacific coast*); the way in which facts and details taken from the book being reviewed are used by the writer (*the whales that migrate from Baja California to the Arctic, close-knit groups called pods*); the effect of connecting the humans and whales on their journey (*whale and human cultures seem to converge, eroding the gap, like the whales they pursue, inseparable from their literary quarry, whales act as stepping-stones, bridges to human relationships*); the effect of other triads or lists (as above) (*Depleted, insolvent and isolated*); the effect of the language of mythology and story-telling (*the male-dominated narratives, Inuit mythology, heroic pair, a reckless, near-mystical pursuit of an imagined being*); the effect of the metaphors (*provides a key thread in the book, a wealth of fascinating ethnographic material, catapult her further into debt*); the connotations of the phrase *simmers, tantalisingly* in the final paragraph, and the effect of the interrogative sentence beginning the final paragraph.

Stronger responses were often characterised by greater clarity in the critical terminology employed in analysing form, structure and language. Conversely, weaker responses often described style, mood, and vocabulary as having 'positive connotations' or 'negative connotations', with little further elaboration or

definition. Similarly, a range of precisely constructed language effects were sometimes summed up as 'creating an interesting image' or 'stopping the reader from being bored'. It is important that candidates use precise terminology to access the higher levels. In some responses, there was muddling of subject terminology and identification of techniques so that similes were called metaphors, stream of consciousness was applied very loosely to the text, and imperatives were named as declaratives. The wider the candidates' critical vocabulary, the more able they will be to describe the precise effects of how meaning is created.

Responses to form were generally rather limited. However, many candidates noted the audience of the text and made clear reference to what they deemed to be characteristic features of a review (subjective, opinion driven, creating rapport with the audience, offer of a final judgement and the purpose being to inform, persuade and/or analyse). More detailed commentaries noted the ways in which the text appeals to its intended audience through tone and register and that this review was one of a memoir, incorporating comments about features of such a form: theme, challenges, inclusion of pivotal moments, honesty and reflective of personality.

Clear and detailed understanding about structure was exemplified through engagement with the way in which the review is structured to reflect the use of a title to introduce it, with a pun in the title; the way in which the opening paragraph clearly establishes the facts behind the subject of the book; the way in which the text is structured to evaluate the highlights of the book and to include personal information about the writer (*painful custody dispute with her son's father*); the lack of chronological structure, as indicated by the inclusion of the personal information in the middle of the review; the way in which discourse markers and anaphoric references are used in the text for cohesion and to develop the review; and the way in which the concluding paragraph is structured to suggest the key question that has dominated response to Cunningham's book, and (as above) to convey the writer's overall opinion of the book – *What could she hope to gain by taking her two-year-old on such a long journey [...] ?*

Limited responses focused on basic points about the arrangement and number of paragraphs of this text. Many candidates also focused on sentence types, but generally this amounted to feature spotting rather than effective, critical engagement. Some of these limited responses offered over-earnest reference to the presence of short, long and complex sentences, without clear analysis referencing specific sentences.

Many limited to clear responses took a paragraph-by-paragraph approach, using the phrase 'in the ... paragraph'; others' analyses ranged haphazardly across the text. It would be helpful for candidates to be aware that the discriminator 'analysis is coherent and effectively structured' is a feature of the higher levels. A whole-text approach can often provide sophisticated and coherent analysis. Another consequence of the line-by-line approach was repetition of the same point, such as the author's use of specific characteristic features. It is worth remembering that the same point cannot be rewarded twice.

Less successful, basic responses offered very generalised and often repetitive comments. These responses identified some language features, but offered limited analysis. Unnecessary repetition of such comments should be avoided, for example, 'alliteration adds rhythm', 'colloquial language helps the reader connect with the writer', 'figurative language is immersive'. These weaker responses tended to summarise the contents of the text, generally at great length. Furthermore, selection of evidence by way of quotation was not always expertly used in these weaker responses, with some candidates quoting at far too great a length, or merely referring to a range of lines rather than the writer's specific choices. Some candidates referred the examiner to a line number or gave the opening two words of a quotation followed by ellipsis; similarly, a line number might be quoted and then two or three features mentioned without specific identification of the features from the line referenced. Quotation from the text should always be precise, as concise as possible and linked to explanatory comments.

ENGLISH LANGUAGE

Paper 9093/22
Writing

Key messages

- Candidates should manage their time carefully, allocating an equal amount of time for each section of the paper. Occasionally the time spent on **Section A** left candidates insufficient time to meet the required word count in **Section B** or to satisfactorily complete the chosen task.
- Candidates should be aware that relevant content in the correct form is a key aspect of the overall assessment of responses for **Question 1(a)** and **Section B** tasks. Candidates should therefore pay particular attention to key words within the question which indicate the specified form, content, audience and purpose of the tasks chosen. For example, in Question 3 the key instruction is to write an **essay**, which implies a serious tone.
- Candidates must understand the importance of writing in clear, properly punctuated English with accurate sentence demarcation to perform well in this exam. It is imperative that candidates know and understand the basics of sentence construction if they are to succeed on this paper. Clear expression in simple and compound sentences without much variety is preferable to expression that does not flow, in long, rambling sentences. In many weaker responses, candidates had lost control of grammar when attempting to write in long, complex sentences. One error that occurred quite regularly was that of separating sentences with commas rather than full stops; another common error was writing in sentence fragments, such as participial phrases not linked to a main clause. Sentence demarcation is key, followed by accurate use of commas, and then the accurate use of a wider range of punctuation.
- Candidates should be reminded of the need to write legibly and clearly to ensure communication is not impeded. Centres should make use of appropriate access arrangements for candidates who are unable to produce legible handwritten text.
- Candidates who have difficulty with tense selection should focus on writing in one tense, preferably either the present tense or the simple past.
- Candidates should be encouraged to proofread carefully, particularly for accurate sentence demarcation and for tense confusion/inconsistency. Such errors impede, sometimes seriously, the overall sense of fluency and cohesion.
- Candidates must be aware of the need for clear paragraphing in their responses, as it is fundamental to the clear organisation and development of ideas.
- Candidates should avoid using overambitious vocabulary of which they cannot demonstrate proper understanding, or which is not suited to the context. Such attempts often detract from otherwise effective communication.
- Candidates should be exposed to a wide variety of different text types, as outlined in the syllabus, so that they become familiar with the conventions of a variety of writing forms and purposes. They should be taught key features of those text types, to enable them to replicate these in their own writing.

General comments

A number of candidates self-penalised on the grounds of rubric infringement, although this was less of an issue than in previous March sessions: a few **Section B** responses were appreciably short of the minimum word limit and a few candidates did not answer **Question 1(b)**.

Stronger responses to **Question 1(a)** focused clearly on the question, resulting in effective news reports written in an appropriate style. Weaker responses often suited the news report form, but sometimes focused entirely on describing the act of bravery, without meeting the requirement to write about the importance of recognising bravery and the impact of the award on the school.

The strongest responses to **Question 1(b)** maintained a close focus on linguistic and stylistic choices, with the relationship between these features being explained and explored successfully. They applied relevant terminology consistently and confidently, using language precisely and appropriately. Weaker responses focused entirely on content and therefore only provided minimal analysis, usually indirectly by outlining the structure of the piece.

Stronger responses on **Section B** generally had a strong sense of the appropriate form for the task, (review, essay or story), a clear focus on the question and included appropriate stylistic conventions as well as relevant content.

Weaker responses on **Section B** sometimes lacked focus on what the task required. For example, some **Question 2** responses were mainly accounts of the hotel stay, with little in the way of critique or personal opinion; some responses to **Question 3** were written in a style more suited to an article than an essay; while some **Question 4** responses were not complete stories.

Comments on specific questions

Section A: Shorter writing and reflective commentary

Question 1

A teenager from your school has recently been given an award for bravery. You decide to write a news report about this, which will be published in your local newspaper.

- (a) **Write the text for your news report, using no more than 400 words. In your writing, focus on the importance of recognising bravery and the impact this award has had on your school.**

Some candidates wrote underdeveloped responses of 250 words or less, whilst others exceeded the word limit, sometimes writing up to 650 words. A few candidates neglected to explain what the heroic deed actually was.

Most candidates were familiar with the conventions of writing a news report. They paragraphed their work clearly and most responses were organised sensibly. Successful responses came from those candidates who had read the question carefully and structured their responses around the 'recognition of bravery' and the 'impact' of the teenager's brave actions on the school. Most candidates gave an account of the heroic deed first and then proceeded to address both parts of the question: 'the importance of recognising bravery and the impact it had on the school'. Consequently, there were award ceremonies of different kinds with appropriate dignitaries in attendance, and then an outline of how the school benefited in different ways, such as enhanced reputation, increased enrolment, financial investment, and improvement in the behaviour and morale of the pupils.

Stronger responses summarised the act of bravery at some stage within the report, but gave due weighting to the award itself and to how pride in the teenager's action affected the other students and caused them to become more considerate and responsible members of the community. Stronger responses included headlines and, quite often, a strapline. There were examples of well thought through headlines where alliteration and intertextuality featured. Many headlines successfully attracted the attention of the reader; some examples were: 'Behold Bravery; fearless in face of fire', 'Courage knows no age!' and 'Phoenix emerging from the ashes'. Rhythm and rhyme were effective in 'A swim in time saves nine', together with idiomatic phrases such as: 'Right place, right time.' Some stronger responses featured subheadings as structural devices. For example, one report featured commentary on 'The Incident', followed by a section on 'Our Knight in Shining Armour Honoured' and concluded with a section on 'Recognition for Our School.'

Stronger responses presented plausible scenarios featuring, for example, the dramatic rescue of children from an intruder or a fire in a school, the rescue of a child who had fallen into a well and a teenager who saved various cats and dogs. They used a range of dramatic language to convey the tense moment. In the case of an individual threatening the safety of young children, one candidate described the atmosphere: 'Terror and confusion permeated the air.' Stronger responses showed mindfulness of the need to highlight the teenager's initial fears/phobias/qualms that were cast aside as their 'warrior-like' instinct came to the fore. Another candidate described their character's fear of water, 'running from it like a cat caught in the rain'. This was replaced by the character 'running to the child's aid' in that 'moment of courage'.

Stronger responses also included relevant details of the award ceremony. There were references to the teenager's bravery, including direct quotations from headteachers, friends and family members. The language used was uplifting, positive and inspirational. Descriptions of the teenager's 'selfless humility' and 'selfless actions' together with phrases capturing the mood amongst staff and pupils were features of strong responses. One candidate wrote, 'Our school stands tall with souls shining with pride.' To address the 'impact ... on your school' part of the question, candidates commented on the volunteering taking place, everyday acts of kindness and how there is 'now a sense of community'. There were references to headteachers now wishing to 'create and mould young people who are empathetic and selfless'.

In terms of weaker responses, some candidates spent too long addressing the 'importance of recognising bravery' while others wrote almost entirely about the brave deed, lacking the focus required on the importance of recognising bravery and its impact on the school. These reports often stretched credulity, with minor acts of common sense (such as pulling a struggling younger child out of the school's swimming pool or preventing a puppy from falling off a ledge) being given recognition at a national level. Some weaker responses did not fulfil the requirements of the task as they did not reference the impact the award has had on the school. Others merely listed the impact of the award by citing numerous events teenagers had become involved in.

(b) Write a reflective commentary on your text, explaining how your linguistic choices contribute to fulfilling the task set.

Candidates are becoming more familiar and confident with writing a commentary. However, there is still an inclination for candidates to be more concerned with content focus instead of exploring and analysing how their use of language was used to shape their response to **1(a)**. Nearly all candidates were able to comment on how the news report had been structured. In many cases candidates referenced the 'Pyramid' structure or 'Inverted Triangle.'

Stronger responses included comments on a good range of linguistic features. These included comments on some of the conventions of news reports: use of headings, tense, third person impersonal voice, formal (or semi-formal) register and direct quotations. Other features identified included the use of first-person voice (where appropriate), rhetorical questions, repetition, tricolons, figures of speech, parallelism, sentence types, allusions, tonal shifts, subordinating and coordinating conjunctions, structure and diction.

Stronger responses maintained a close focus on the linguistic and stylistic choices made for writing the speech, as well as making use of appropriate terminology linked to effect. These candidates identified some features in their writing, using correct linguistic terminology, then subsequently exemplified how and why they had been used to relate to the audience and achieve the intended purpose. For example, one candidate wrote: 'The use of highly charged words with negative connotations like "nihilistic" and "apathetic" and juxtaposing them with "empathy", "kindness" and "bravery" serve effectively to convey the growing need for such virtues in a world where there is a "dearth" of them.' Another candidate commented in some detail on their choice of vocabulary: 'I have also made use of positive lexicon such as "joy", "ecstasy", "bravery", "grateful" and "inspired", which create a sense of enthusiasm around the topic and subtly instil positive emotions in the audience.'

Weaker responses were often limited or, in some cases, absent. Some responses were quite lengthy but were largely a paraphrase of the news report's content rather than analysis of the candidate's choices. Where relevant features were identified, explanations were often vague or poorly expressed, such as: 'I wrote in paragraphs to make it clearer' and 'I used a chronological structure to organise my report.'

Weaker responses did not link features to effects, or explain their relationship to audience, meaning and purpose, often lacking in evidence of examples to support points made. For example, one candidate cited the use of 'grass root language' with no examples or explanation of the term. Another candidate wrote about 'Basic metaphors' but with no examples or explanation of why they were chosen. Some weaker responses commented on sentence structure and sentence variation in a very general way, for example: 'Simple sentences make the text easy to understand.'

Section B: Extended writing

Question 2 – Review

You and your family recently went on holiday for a week and stayed in a new hotel. Write a review of the hotel, which will be published on a travel website. Write between 600 and 900 words.

Candidates wrote about hotels in a wide range of locations, which included most continents and varied environs. Goa was quite popular but there were also visits to the Bahamas, Maldives, Switzerland, the USA, Turkey, Switzerland, France, Australia and Japan. Some hotels were part of a beach resort; others were in jungle, mountains, or urban locations, and one was even an underwater hotel. Most candidates understood the nature of the review form, that it should include some critique of the hotel. Consequently, candidates commented on a range of relevant aspects of the experience: hotel décor, food/restaurants, facilities, activities, staff and the surroundings. Reviews were occasionally wholly positive or wholly negative whilst most offered both pros and cons.

Many stronger responses included subheadings as structural devices, followed by a star rating for each aspect of the hotel's interior. 'Rooms,' 'Service' and 'Food' were common headings. Some candidates showed careful consideration of vocabulary choices: there were 'Panoramic Views', 'Mouthwatering delicious breakfasts' and 'a beautiful blend of luxury and affordability'. Others included references to comments on social media, such as, 'I wanted to check out the latest hotel which has been on everyone's mind and Instagram feeds.' Candidates included both positive and negative experiences overall. Humour and sarcasm as a way of offering comments on the hotel's features were effectively managed in stronger responses. One candidate commented on how 'the nauseating patches of green adorned the balconies lined with a robust coat of rust and broken dreams'.

One candidate wrote very effectively about the hotel décor as follows: 'One step inside, however, dismisses any assumption of modesty as you step into a world of opulence and indulgence. A large crystal chandelier hangs in the entry hall, frozen in an interminable moment of timeless beauty.' Most stronger reviews concluded well, ending with a sentence or paragraph that gave further credibility to the review and the persona that had been adopted, as in this example: 'If you do not want to ruin your trip, and value your sanity, please do not stay at Hotel Piri. I wish I could give them a chance, considering that it is a new establishment, but they do not deserve it. Save yourself the agony and the indignation and book a better hotel, any other hotel for your stay in Agregento.'

Some weaker responses consisted of a narrative account of the holiday rather than maintaining a balance between recount and review. This was particularly evident at the start of the review where there were often lengthy details about booking a hotel, together with the subsequent journey details to get there. Such responses lacked the sense of a review of a new hotel for a travel website. Other candidates wrote reviews which contained frequent errors, as in this example: 'We directly went to the hotel after a long hours of flight. As much as tired I was, I was more pumped to go to this new hotel, fervid and ready to jump out of the car. We arrived, jettisoned the luggages and I stormed through the red carpet leading to an elegant entrance, calling it divine would be an understatement.'

Question 3 – Essay

Your class has just had a discussion about whether publishers should stop printing books on paper because everyone reads on screens these days. Your teacher has asked you to write an essay on the topic, giving your opinion. Write between 600 and 900 words.

There were many engaging and interesting points of view which were, overall, well organised and insightful. Candidates were generally very much in favour of publishers continuing to print books on paper, and Stronger responses used a range of linguistic techniques to convey the joy of holding a book. Printed books were lauded for the fact that they were tangible and were pleasant to touch and smell. They could also be annotated, which was seen as helpful when studying. On the other hand, they could be weighty (for example, carrying textbooks to school and back), were perishable and expensive to produce. Environmental

issues connected to trees and the production of paper were also seen as negatives. Many candidates argued against the harmful effects of reading on screen, citing how 'excessive time affects cognition and mental health'. Equally effective were comments in support of reading on screens. Candidates used highly emotive language to convey quite strident views. One candidate described the 'shameful waste of scarce resources'. Another commented on the 'efficient and convenient use' of tablets, laptops, and electronic reading devices, where 'thousands of books can fit into one simple device'.

Stronger responses often began with effective opening paragraphs. For example, one candidate began with: 'Hard or Soft? How do you like your books?' Stronger responses saw the advantages and disadvantages of both forms and developed their arguments logically and clearly. One candidate emphasised the wonder of 'freshly printed white paper'. Several candidates attempted to convey the 'smell' of paper using phrases such as 'enchanted aroma'. Arguments in favour ranged from the comfort of 'snuggling up' with a book on a 'rainy day' rather than the impersonal experience of feeling plastic or metal. Some candidates argued in favour of retaining printed books on economic grounds, in one example citing how publishing companies who employ a lot of people 'generate significant income. A complete cessation would affect global economic activity.'

Weaker responses sometimes showed a struggle to develop points and the focus tended to be on the history of paper along with lengthy, but less relevant, comments on deforestation and global warming. Sometimes lengthy paragraphs limited the opportunity for candidates to form an argument. On other occasions, points were made quite simply with frequent errors and conclusions were not very convincing, such as in this example: 'In conclusion, whether to print the books or to upload it on the screen; it solely depends upon the rating of the book. If the published book has a good review, it can be uploaded to the websites allowing access to all over the world. Different underrated writer's books from online websites can be printed for the reader to keep it as a keepsake.'

Question 4 – Review

Write a story called *On my doorstep*, about a person who opened their front door and was surprised to find a very large, heavy bag with their name on it. Write between 600 and 900 words.

Most candidates noted the description of the bag as 'large' and 'heavy' with 'their name on it', but did not always fully convey a moment of surprise. There were, however, many engaging and entertaining responses with the bag on the doorstep containing a wide range of objects. These included a dead body, the protagonist's mother's wedding dress, a mannequin, Russian dolls (with a message), stolen treasure, and more. In one quite original futuristic story the bag contained memories that the protagonist decided to return to their rightful owners before finally being arrested for memory theft. In another story, the bag contained the belongings of the protagonist's murdered father.

Stronger responses often incorporated credible and effective openings. They paid attention to mood and atmosphere, veering away from the 'Ding dong' of the doorbell opening to focusing on the person's concern, in one case, to discover the 'door ajar'. Much was made of the bag itself before it was opened, increasing intrigue and suspense. One candidate concentrated on describing the leather 'withering away at the corners,' another on the 'feeling of parchment in my hands' as the person reached inside the bag. Specific details on various objects in the bag were effectively communicated, as in this description of a notebook: 'There are cobwebs tying the book shut. I pry it open, dust heavy on my fingertips.' Clear and effective responses were structured so that those elements of surprise and intrigue were conveyed to the reader. In the following extract, the candidate effectively builds up suspense about its contents: 'Scenes of the past cascaded down her mind, overwhelmingly and nauseatingly vivid. She recalled the medical taste of the strawberry gum she was chewing when she had opened the front door and had found, on the very doorstep where she stood now, a very large, heavy bag. It was an innocuous, drab green bag made of thick, waterproof material. But even then she had felt a sharp foreboding as she picked up the card attached to it, bearing her name and address.'

Some weaker responses featured long, largely unnecessary preambles before the actual discovery of the bag. Some stories suffered from tense switching – often starting in the present tense, switching to past and then back to the present again. Other weaker responses were incomplete stories, while others resorted to the cliché of the main character waking up from a dream. Some contained frequent errors, which impeded the clarity of communication; one such story began thus: 'Ding, dong! My doorbell rang in its usual heavy vibes. Me who, was busy with handling stuffs over phone told them that I'll keep the phone now.'

ENGLISH LANGUAGE

Paper 9093/32
Language Analysis

Key messages

Candidates are presented with two compulsory questions: **Question 1** in **Section A** required analysis of three texts from which candidates needed to present their analytical findings in respect of *Language change*. **Question 2** in **Section B** requires analysis of a transcription of conversation which exemplified aspects of *Child language acquisition*.

Ideas presented in responses need to be evidenced throughout by a careful selection of data from the stimulus material. Moreover, analyses need to contain theoretical references to the area of wider study relevant to the topic.

General comments

In the March 2024 session, candidates engaged well with the stimulus material, although responses were more sustained in **Section A** than **Section B**. Generally, lengthier and more detailed work was seen in response to **Question 1**, indicating perhaps that candidates had not always left sufficient time for a full analysis of the transcription presented in **Question 2**. Dividing the examination time carefully is part of the required technique for Paper 3 because each of the two compulsory questions carries 25 marks.

The level of detailing seen in **Question 1** compared to **Question 2** was generally due not only to demonstration of keener analytical skills but also to the depth of theoretical referencing, which was sometimes only at surface level in responses to **Question 2**.

Overall, responses were organised clearly into logical sequences of paragraphs, and control and clarity of expression were clear to effective with some detailed development of ideas.

Comments on specific questions

Section A

Question 1

Question 1 requires candidates to refer to Texts A, B and C in their analysis of how they exemplify the various ways in which the English language has changed over time. This session, Text A comprised extracts from *The London adviser and guide: containing every instruction and information useful and necessary to persons living in London, and coming to reside there*, written in 1786. Text B was a word table which presented five of the top adjectives following the phrase ‘*be cool and ...*’ from the Early English Books Online corpus (1620–1690) and the Corpus of Contemporary American English (1990–2019). Text C was an *n*-gram graph for *any thing* and *anything* (1760–2019). Candidates were further required to support their analysis with ideas and examples from their wider study of *Language change*.

Assessment Objectives 2 (Writing – 5 marks), 4 (Conceptualisation – 5 marks) and 5 (Data handling – 15 marks) were applied.

Writing – Assessment Objective 2

All candidates observed the requirement to analyse each of the three texts. In most responses, Texts B and C were explored separately from Text A, therefore there was some loss of overall cohesion – even when development of ideas on Texts B and C was sustained. For example, separate comments on Text C were

usually added at the end of the main body of a response rather than demonstrating how the writer of Text A had used *any thing* as a split form in line 17.

Most candidates maintained an appropriate tone throughout their response. Discourse markers were used well to separate or develop ideas, meaning that paragraphing remained fluently and logically sequential. Technical terminology was used with ease and accuracy in effective or sophisticated responses whilst those limited responses included only general descriptors to label data selected from the text.

In March 2024, most candidates focused their analysis through a series of linguistic frameworks such as graphology, orthography, lexis, grammar, syntax, pragmatics, etymology, semantics or morphology. Responses which were organised using this approach maintained a linguistic standpoint. Responses which were more generalised described changes in ‘words’ or ‘spelling’ for example, rather than lexis or orthography, which led to an overall lower and less technical register. Effective or insightful responses made a thorough exploration of grammar and syntactical structures, such as *If there be no way out* or *as allo in what ltuation the fire-plugs are*, using a wide range of technical terminology with accuracy.

Conceptualisation – Assessment Objective 4

Weaker responses opened with at least one paragraph of historical detail by way of an introduction. A long introduction is unnecessary in an analytical essay and can also lead to a considerable amount of irrelevant material. Stronger responses demonstrated immediate focus on the texts provided, evidencing keen analytical skills.

Most responses identified Text A as Early Modern English, with stronger responses detailing similarities with Late Modern English due to the text’s publication date (1786). Almost all responses discussed Text A in relation to the process of standardisation over time, including references to Johnson’s dictionary and the ways in which technological advancement in printing might affect graphological features. Most usually, Crystal or Halliday were cited to reinforce ideas on technological developments. Less secure were references to the Industrial Revolution or Jespersen’s Great Vowel Shift (in analysis of *cloaths*) as these did not sit easily alongside the publication date of Text A.

Analyses of the level of formality in Text A led to references to Goodman’s Informalisation, Aitchison’s notions of Progress or Decay or Romaine on sociological change. Less secure were attempts to reference de Saussure with limited understanding and relevance, although the concepts of broadening, narrowing, etymology and the evolution of compounding were generally relevantly and accurately explored.

Data Handling – Assessment Objective 5

A common error which was seen in many responses in their discussion of lexis was to label *tradesman* and *parish* as obsolete. Candidates should be aware that just because a certain lexical item is not part of their day-to-day lexicon, it does not mean that the item is obsolete – perhaps more accurately it could be described as low frequency. Further weakness was seen in some responses which demonstrated confusion over the use of the long s. The long s was not used randomly as stated in some responses: convention was that this grapheme should always appear in initial or medial position but not in final position.

Most responses explored Text A’s use of the ampersand which is now more usually used informally but seen in Text A as &c. Development of such analysis was also often developed with reference to the Latin derivation: ‘et cetera’. The etymology and narrowing of *chamber* (from the French *chambre*) was widely known.

Text B was usually analysed in terms of semantic shift in *be cool and* – most responses discussed whether broadening could be seen between the two columns of Text B where *cool* could have evolved to apply to personal identity. However, there was equally plausible discussion of whether amelioration could be seen, usually with mention of Hartl and Clark and cultural transmission. Further lexical analysis in terms of pragmatic shift – sociologically and perhaps pejoratively – concerned *master* and *mistress*, and *preservative* which most responses acknowledged as commonly used in foodstuffs in the present day.

The data in the graph in Text C was interpreted well. Usually, responses acknowledged the progression from the split form to the compound *anything*. In stronger responses, effective comparisons were drawn with Text A’s frequent hyphenation, for example in *bank-notes*, *fire-plugs*, or *ftone-clolets*.

Using syntax as a framework, detailed responses sought to analyse the sentence constructions seen in Text A. Development was seen in responses which made an effective exploration of demarcation of phrase by

punctuation, with commentary on how the text might be understood by a contemporary reader. Analysis of graphological aspects of Text A, including the numbering system and extended title, were also compared to that of present-day English with generally clear discussion of findings.

Overall, responses to **Question 1** demonstrated depth of engagement with the stimulus material, particularly with Text A, and some effectively developed analysis was seen. At times, weaker responses relied on translation of phrases seen in Text A into what would be more acceptable in contemporary English. Although this approach is creditable to an extent, it offers only a limited form of analysis.

Section B

Question 2

Question 2 required candidates to analyse a transcription of a conversation between Charlie (age 5) and his mother, who were eating breakfast together. Analytical responses needed to demonstrate ways in which Charlie and his mother were using language during their conversation. As well as references to specific details from the transcription, candidates were required to supply ideas and examples from their wider study of *Child language acquisition*.

Assessment Objectives 1 (Understanding – 5 marks), 4 (Conceptualisation – 15 marks) and 5 (Data handling – 5 marks) were applied.

Understanding – Assessment Objective 1

All candidates demonstrated a clear understanding of the conventions of conversation analysis transcription. The interactive nature of the conversation was understood well with features such as fulfilled adjacency pairs, turn-taking and interruption being noted in most responses. At times, it seemed that responses had relied on the transcription key to give clues to aid feature-spotting rather than demonstrate deep reading of the utterances shown. Although feature-spotting is creditable to a basic or limited extent when features are accurately labelled, clear, effective or sophisticated responses will always provide evidence of understanding of how and why features are used by the interlocutors according to age, stages of acquisition and levels of caretaking responsibility.

Further understanding was demonstrated in responses which discussed characteristic features such as the way in which Charlie's mother used a variety of interrogatives and declaratives, the ways in which raised and lowered volume and intonation were used between interlocutors, pronoun use, use of tenses, negation and false start.

Conceptualisation – Assessment Objective 4

Most responses accurately indicated that Charlie had reached the post-telegraphic or continuing development stage of language acquisition, although there was occasional incorrect identification of the holophrastic stage. This misunderstanding could have been reached as Charlie occasionally produces elliptical constructions, for example *THERE (.) finished*, but at age 5, the likelihood is that Charlie is omitting grammatical items purposefully and with confidence in the relaxed setting of his home.

At times, there was difference of opinion on whether Charlie remained in Piaget's preoperational stage (using his egotistical nature as evidence) or whether he had reached the concrete operational stage (using Charlie's use of logical argument in his *well YOU do*). Where a careful selection of examples from the transcription were used as support, both opinions in terms of Piagetian stages became plausible. The most effective responses presented both opinions and then made a decision according to the weight of the analytical findings.

The mother was seen as a Language Acquisition Support System as according to Bruner in most responses. She exhibited child-directed speech in her questioning technique (including question tag to encourage turn-taking) and the way in which she separated her instructions by timed pause and micropause, for example: *now (1) you can (.) you can pour your cereal (.) from the packet (.) into your bowl (.) but you dont put your hand in the bowl*. She also offered Charlie the opportunity to make a decision in *which cereal then charlie* although her attempt was unfruitful.

A number of Hallidayan functions were evidenced in the transcription. These were seen, for example, in *dont look at it whilst we are eating* (Regulatory), *i hate cereal and i hate toast* (Personal), *its on your head* (Representational) and *wheres the bowl* (Heuristic or possibly Imaginative, as Charlie is playing). Most

responses referenced Halliday to some extent, although at times the names of the individual functions were misapplied to the selection made from the transcription.

Most responses also demonstrated understanding of how Charlie's mother used both positive and negative reinforcement as outlined by Skinner, for example in *thats a good word*, which aimed to encourage use of new vocabulary, and in *you dont hate toast* with her contradiction of Charlie. However, in both of these examples, the mother's use of emphatic stress to strengthen her positivity or negativity was not generally acknowledged.

Overall, in March 2024, fewer theories and theorists were referenced than in previous sessions. Moreover, support from conceptualisation was often brief, although there was some effective reference to Montessori, Dore or Aitchison. Candidates should be aware of the weighting of Assessment Objective 4 in **Question 2** as 15 of the 25 marks are available under that AO.

Data Handling – Assessment Objective 5

Very few candidates attempted phonological analysis although Charlie's utterances demonstrated full phonological competence. Evidence from the transcription which could have been explored was seen in Charlie's *glance* which included the difficult consonant cluster /gl/. The new word was immediately taken up with clear understanding on Charlie's part and used in repetition, for example *glance (1) glance* as he assimilated it into his lexicon.

A common inaccuracy emerged in scrutiny of Charlie's /wɒnə/ which was labelled in almost all responses as a virtuous error instead of analysing Charlie's competence in producing the Americanised elision of 'want to'. Virtuous errors were evidenced in the transcription, however, in *i just dont want cereal (1) i just want cereal*. However, Charlie's linguistic competence championed his own linguistic performance when he corrected himself after a one-second pause.

Charlie's varied pronoun use was noted in clear or effective responses. His range included *i*, *you*, *your* and *it*, but his linguistic performance lapsed in the oddly constructed *wheres the bowl for me?* as analysed in more effective responses. Stronger responses also explored Charlie's use of tenses, which included present simple and continuous, for example *im doing it*, together with his understanding of the mother's reference to future events, for example *i will do it for you* and *right (.) okay (.) we'll have breakfast and then we'll glance at it* as she attempted to bargain with Charlie.

Although most responses observed Charlie's competence in controlling his volume for emphasis, for example in *well YOU do*, the most insightful responses analysed the way in which he was also able to transpose the place of stress in his next utterance from pronoun to verb: *you DO*. Very few responses included analysis of Charlie's decreased volume in *°im doing it°* which may have been an indication of the way in which he attempted to communicate his frustration or resentment.

Overall, in March 2024, understanding and data handling were clear to effective in terms of the meaning of the transcription and labelling of characteristic features, forming the basis of analytical findings. These two aspects of analysis should knit tightly together in an effective response. In this session, responses included a smaller selection of examples from the transcription, therefore more evidential support was required for responses to move through the higher levels of the mark scheme.

ENGLISH LANGUAGE

Paper 9093/42
Language Topics

Key messages

In the March 2024 session, Paper 42 presented candidates with the opportunity to demonstrate their knowledge and understanding of two language topics – *English in the world* and *Language and the self*. Two compulsory questions (**Question 1** in **Section A** and **Question 2** in **Section B**) required responses in discursive essay form. Ideas needed to be supported by a careful selection of evidence from the stimulus material provided, together with relevant reference to linguistic issues, concepts, methods and approaches.

The questions required sustained, logically sequenced and cohesive responses in which focus on the language topics and relevant question frame was maintained throughout. Each question carried 25 marks, meaning that there were 50 marks available in total. In March 2024, there was a tendency for candidates to provide a lengthy and detailed response to **Question 1** and a shorter and more generalised response to **Question 2**, indicating a shorter time spent on **Question 2**. Candidates should be aware that dividing the examination time equally in order to supply as full a response as possible to the second question is part of a secure examination technique which may assist them to maximise their potential.

General comments

In March 2024, although it was clear that the broader language topics themselves were engaged with effectively, there was a trend among responses to supply insufficient evidence from the stimulus material as support for ideas. This meant that many responses made clear to effective reference to the wider study of the language topics in question but only basic or limited reference to specific points made in the texts provided. Assessment Objectives 1 and 4 are equally weighted therefore it should be noted that in future examination sessions, responses could be improved by making a greater selection of detail from the stimulus material.

At times, some very lengthy work was seen which candidates had not always controlled according to the requirements of Assessment Objective 2. It is important to note that, although AO2 offers fewer marks than AOs 1 and 4, it is not only the clarity and control of expression, for example spelling, punctuation, grammar and paragraphing, which is under consideration. This assessment objective also considers the extent to which ideas are developed and whether they are relevant to the direct focus which is presented in the question.

Comments on specific questions

Section A

Question 1

The stimulus material for **Question 1** was an extract from a review of Rosemary C. Salomone's book, *The Rise of English – Global Politics and the Power of Language*, titled *How the English Language Conquered the World*. The review had been published in the New York Times in 2022. Candidates were required to discuss what they felt were the most important issues raised in the text relating to *the present and future status of English in an international context*. They were further required to refer to specific details from the text as well as to ideas and examples from their wider study of English in the world.

Assessment Objective 1 – Understanding

The text provided had supplied a number of specific points for possible inclusion in responses. These covered: the notion that language may be associated with sociological factors, for example, *political, economic and cultural* and how or why language wars may be the result of such associations; domination of English of internet content and how English has become the *lingua franca* of popular culture and the global economy; how *French bureaucrats constantly try to ban Anglicisms* to counter the *hegemony of English*; the position of English in South Africa where it *dominates every sector* even though only *one in ten* speak it as their first language; the meaning of *symbolic importance* of English in South Africa as *the language of Black resistance to the Afrikaner-dominated apartheid regime*, and the notion that *English reigns supreme for its economic power* in South Africa and in many other parts of the world.

Most responses demonstrated a clear to detailed understanding of at least some of the specific points raised and were often developed by consideration of whether the power of English is changing, and if so, in which direction this evolution is moving. Responses which supplied development in this way retained a clear focus on the question frame which required exploration of the *present and future status of English*.

Weaker responses tended to be limited to inclusions of ideas on English as a basis for industrial expansion where it could be seen as vital for trade and commerce. Very few basic responses were seen and those mainly used English as the language of the worldwide web to underpin ideas.

Assessment Objective 2 – Writing

In general, responses were carefully crafted into logical and fluent sequences of paragraphs, even though at times a greater selection of evidence from the text was required. Effective or sophisticated control of writing was seen where points raised were evidenced by succinct and pertinent selections from the stimulus material and supported by relevant theoretical examples.

Most responses used the points raised in the text as they appeared chronologically and therefore discussed the position of English in France first and then, separately, its position in South Africa. However, more effective responses took an overview and drew comparisons and contrasts between the ways in which France and South Africa viewed the English language which was a more cohesive approach.

Minor lapses into colloquialism and some repetition were seen in limited responses. Overall, however, tone and register were maintained in clear to effective responses. In more sophisticated responses, technical terminology bolstered the linguistic standpoint wherever insightful discussion was presented.

Assessment Objective 4 – Conceptualisation

A very wide range of linguistic issues, methods, models and approaches was presented in March 2024. Weaker responses tended to make limited reference to colonialism, Phillipson's notion of linguistic imperialism or Crystal's language and power. These responses discussed language death in general terms instead of introducing Pakir's English as a 'killer language' or citing UNESCO's stages towards extinction.

Most responses cited Kachru's concentric circle model with weaker responses providing too much detail on this one particular model, often losing focus on the question frame. It should be noted that in discussions of Kachru's model, candidates are not required to replicate it in the form of a diagram in the main body of a response. Stronger responses referenced the models of Rose and Galloway (Channels of English) and MacArthur's Wheel to illustrate similar ideas to McCrum in his notion that the spread of English is 'inexorable'.

Clear responses, however, drew contrasts between the French government's involvement and the Singaporean Speak Good English campaign, or the English Only Movement in America which aimed to promote English as the sole official language. Effective development was made in more detailed responses with consideration of this point with inclusion of references to substrate and superstrate as outlined by Labov. Further development included Graddol's ideas on connecting language which at times led to discussion of hybridisation, usually using Hinglish or Singlish as examples but more detailed referencing included Jenkins on Chinglish.

Some insightful points were raised on whether South African English was being used as the language of freedom if Afrikaans was seen as the language of the oppressor, citing Trudgill or the Anti-Hindi Movement in Tamil Nadu and Kannada. Cooke's comparison of English to the Trojan horse was also introduced into

sophisticated responses, as well as the international parallel drawn by Anderson in Ghana and Jonathan Swift's views on prescriptivism.

Section B

Question 2

The stimulus material for **Question 2** was an article from the American newspaper, *The Seattle Times*, titled *Native American women are reclaiming their language*. It had been published in 2021. Candidates were required to discuss what they felt were the most important issues raised in the text relating to the ways in which *language can shape and reflect personal and social identity*. They were further required to refer to specific details from the text as well as to ideas and examples from their wider study of Language and the self.

Assessment Objective 1 – Understanding

The stimulus material provided a range of points relevant to the question frame concerning language and personal and social identity. These included: the way the writer, Geary, *felt less Indian* when she realised she *did not know a single Mutsun word*; why, in terms of her personal identity, Geary wanted to dedicate *her life to reclaiming her 'Indianness'*; why it may be an important part of one's personal and social identity to have knowledge and understanding of one's own ancestry; how one's own identity is linked to language *associated with a rich set of stories and narratives*, and the extent to which language is *deeply rooted in identity. It's how you see the world, and how the world sees you*.

Most responses demonstrated a clear understanding of why Geary wanted to explore her ancestral language in order to develop her own identity and establish a social identity among other potential Mutsun speakers. However, weaker responses tended to lose focus on the requirements of the question, concentrating instead on the wider issue of language revitalisation and language death, with very scant reference to the key points raised in connection with language and personal and social identity.

Assessment Objective 2 – Writing

In general, responses to **Question 2** were not always as sustained as those to **Question 1**, indicating a lack of development, although there was some sophisticated discussion in insightful responses.

In an attempt to stylise the response, rhetorical questioning was sometimes used. This approach is not advised as it leads to loss of register and can only ever be fruitful if questions are followed by the candidate's own ideas. Repetition of ideas was also seen in June 2024, usually preceded by discourse markers 'As mentioned earlier' or 'As previously stated'.

Although selections from the stimulus material were fewer in number than in previous sessions overall, there was a tendency in limited responses to extract long quotes from the text to add length and give the impression of sustained work. Conversely, carefully crafted responses demonstrated clear, effective or sophisticated writing skills when succinct quotes were embedded and use of low frequency lexis, appropriate discourse markers and accurate linguistic terminology were used.

Assessment Objective 4 - Conceptualisation

The extract from the text most frequently cited was *In Mutsun, to say 'thank you,' one would say, 'Suururuy ritoksitkawas, which transliterates to 'Blessings from the village I am of'* which responses used to introduce wider study of the Native American Hopi tribe and linguistic reflectionism. Further knowledge and understanding of the assimilation of Native American peoples were demonstrated in references to Pratt's Carlisle Indian Industrial Boarding School where practices led to loss of the indigenous language Choctaw.

Taking the title of the article, most responses discussed programmes of language revitalisation including Welsh in Wales, Te Reo Maori in New Zealand, or Sanskrit in India and its role in Hindu culture. Those responses who retained focus on the question frame included reference to Kramarae's Muted Group Theory to illustrate ideas on how Mutsun should be promoted and shared.

The most insightful conceptual references included exploration of the text's *she could not find native Mutsun speakers* in relation to Tajfel's Social Identity Theory and notions of social categorisation, identification and comparison indicating where there is no language there is no identity. Social identity was further explored by

referencing Milroy and Milroy's social network of a tribe, where close ties are formed, shared through cultural transmission as argued by Hartl and Clark, or dismantled due to dialect levelling, coined by Kerswill.

Although Geary's *It's how you see the world, and how the world sees you* may have been seen as an opportunity to introduce the Sapir-Whorf Hypothesis, or indeed the Boas-Jakobson Principle, a generally limited understanding of how such conceptualisation could be made relevant to Geary's statement was demonstrated, although there was some clear discussion of how one's language determines one's worldview and one's own place in it. In discussions on language and thought, rather than personal and social identity, Wittgenstein's quote, 'The limits of my language are the limits of my mind' was relevant, although in some cases only the quote was supplied without further discussion on its meaning or its appropriateness to the discussion in hand.

Overall, responses to **Question 2** could have been improved with a more streamlined focus on the question frame and more frequent inclusions of evidence from the stimulus material. Nonetheless, some sophisticated work was seen with insightful conceptual references used as support.