

Principal examiner reports for teachers

Principal examiner reports for teachers summarise what candidates did well and what candidates needed to improve for this examination series only.

This report is to be used in conjunction with the question paper and mark scheme.

For guidance on teaching and learning we provide resources for many of our syllabuses.

Resource	Where to find it
Grade descriptions – Grade descriptions describe the level of performance typically demonstrated by candidates achieving the different grades awarded for a qualification.	School support hub Select: Subject > Resource finder > Syllabus and specimen materials
Schemes of work – Schemes of work are designed to support you in your teaching and lesson planning.	School support hub Select: Subject > Resource finder > Teaching and learning
Lesson planning – Guidance on how to plan a lesson.	Lesson planning
Resource plus – There may be additional resources such as teaching packs containing lesson plans, resources and worksheets and videos for aspects of your syllabus.	School support hub Select: Subject > Resource finder > Teaching and learning
Teaching tools	Teaching Tools
Exemplar candidate responses	School support hub Select: Subject > Resource finder > Teaching and learning
Learner guide – A guide for students to help them understand what the course involves.	School support hub Select: Subject > Resource finder > Teaching and learning
Community forums – Do you have a question or something to share? Our online forums are great way to keep up to date with your subject and the global Cambridge community.	Community forum on the school support hub
Access to scripts for this series.	Access to scripts service
Results analysis is available for some syllabuses.	Results analysis
Test maker is available for some subjects.	Test maker

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ENGLISH LANGUAGE

Paper 9093/12 Reading
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Key messages

What candidates did well

- Demonstrated a sound understanding of the demands of the paper and engaged appropriately with all tasks.
- Showed awareness of different text types, particularly in **Question 1(a)**, where most candidates adopted a recognisable blog format.
- Used appropriate conventions such as direct address and rhetorical questions to engage the reader in blog writing.
- Incorporated key ideas from the source material, including benefits such as improved wellbeing and reduced stress.
- Reshaped source material effectively into a personal and reflective voice, integrating anecdotal detail and sustaining audience engagement.
- Demonstrated understanding of differences between texts in **Question 1(b)**, particularly in tone and purpose.
- In more developed responses, adopted an integrated comparative approach, analysing form, structure and language across both texts.
- Identified structural features such as headings, subheadings and organisation, and linked these to clarity and accessibility.
- In **Question 2**, showed a clear understanding of the text's subject matter and recognised it as an informative and descriptive article.
- More successful responses analysed how the text is constructed, including thematic organisation, rhetorical questions, and use of descriptive language.
- Demonstrated awareness of linguistic features such as imagery, lexical choice and register, with some candidates offering detailed and perceptive analysis.
- Used relevant textual references to support analysis.
- Overall, many candidates demonstrated competence, clear understanding of text types, and appropriate control of language.

What candidates needed to improve

- Develop greater precision in the use of linguistic terminology and ensure features are accurately identified (for example, correctly identifying alliteration and avoiding mislabelling features such as personification).
- Move beyond lifting or closely paraphrasing source material in **Question 1(a)**, and instead reshape ideas into a personal, reflective blog voice.
- Maintain consistency of tone in **Question 1(a)**, avoiding shifts between informal and overly formal or instructional language.
- Focus more clearly on both the experience and benefits of habit stacking, rather than describing the process alone.
- Improve organisation and coherence in some responses and adhere more closely to the recommended word limit.
- In **Question 1(b)**, adopt a consistently comparative approach rather than describing each text separately.
- Avoid listing features without explanation; instead, clearly link form, structure and language to audience, purpose and effect.
- Use more precise and relevant textual evidence to support analysis, avoiding general or vague comments.
- In **Question 2**, move beyond summary and content-driven responses towards sustained analytical commentary.

- Develop the ability to explain how and why language, structure and form create meaning and shape reader response.
- Avoid generalised statements such as 'this creates interest' and instead provide detailed, specific analysis.
- Improve accuracy and confidence in the use of linguistic terminology.
- Strengthen analysis at whole-text level, including structural organisation and progression of ideas.
- Ensure quotations are well selected and integrated effectively to support points.
- Maintain a clear focus on analysis rather than paragraph-by-paragraph narration of content.

Comments on specific questions

Question 1

(a) Comprehensive responses

- Demonstrated a clear understanding of the task, producing blog-style responses with a personal, slightly informal register appropriate for an online audience.
- Opened effectively with direct address or rhetorical questions (for example, 'Hello everyone ... how are you all doing?'/ 'How many of you feel bad for not following the routine ...?'), establishing a conversational tone and engaging the reader.
- Maintained this engagement consistently throughout the response, sustaining a clear blog voice.
- Showed secure understanding of the source material, incorporating key ideas such as improved wellbeing, reduced stress, and the practical application of habit stacking.
- Successfully reshaped source material into a personal and reflective voice, rather than reproducing it.
- Integrated anecdotal detail effectively, for example: 'Over the past week, I've been trying this while taking my dog ... and I'm already seeing the benefits!', demonstrating both adaptation and audience awareness.
- Combined explanation with reflection, creating a strong sense of personal engagement.
- Presented the experience as a journey or transformation, for example, 'I decided that what I needed was a shift in mindset ... turning my 'oh no' response to stress into a resounding YES!', demonstrating control of tone and structure.
- Maintained clear focus on both the experience and the benefits of habit stacking.
- Demonstrated effective organisation and coherence throughout.

Limited responses

- Relied heavily on lifting or closely paraphrasing the source material, often reproducing ideas in an instructional manner.
- Produced statements such as 'Habit stacking is a method where you add a new habit to an existing routine...' without personalisation, limiting engagement.
- Needed a clear personal voice and did not fully reflect the conventions of a blog.
- Demonstrated inconsistency in tone, shifting between informal blog style and more formal or explanatory language.
- Focused on describing the process of habit stacking rather than exploring its benefits or personal impact.
- Showed limited awareness of audience and purpose.
- Needed clear organisation or coherence.
- In some cases, exceeded the word limit, affecting clarity and focus.

(b) Comprehensive responses

- Demonstrated a clear understanding of the need for comparison, analysing form, structure and language across both texts.
- Adopted an integrated comparative approach, analysing both texts within the same points rather than treating them separately.
- Recognised key differences in form: the article as informative and structured, and the blog as personal and reflective.
- Identified structural features such as headings and step-by-step guidance in the article, contrasted with the blog's more continuous, reflective narrative.

- Explored how the article establishes credibility through expert reference, for example, 'Yale-trained psychiatrist ... lends credibility to the argument' and linked this to audience and purpose.
- Analysed differences in language and register, contrasting the article's semi-formal, instructional tone with the blog's conversational style, including first-person pronouns, contractions and rhetorical questions.
- Identified shared positive lexis (for example, 'improves sleep quality', 'reduced feelings of stress') and explained how this reinforces persuasive appeal.
- Analysed structural differences in detail, noting how headings and subheadings guide the reader and enhance clarity and accessibility.
- Linked all features clearly to audience, purpose and reader engagement.
- Supported analysis with relevant and well-integrated textual evidence.

Limited responses

- Described each text separately rather than making direct comparisons.
- Listed features without explanation or further development, for example, 'the blog uses first person' or 'the article uses punctuation'.
- Made general or undeveloped comments about tone, structure or language.
- Identified some relevant features (for example, paragraph length differences) yet did not explain their effects.
- Showed limited use of textual evidence, resulting in vague or generic responses.
- Demonstrated limited understanding of how stylistic choices shape meaning.
- Did not consistently link analysis to audience or purpose.

Question 2

Comprehensive responses

- Demonstrated a clear understanding of the text as an informative and descriptive article exploring the cultural significance and global presence of dragons.
- Recognised the hybrid nature of the text, combining informative, descriptive and cultural commentary elements.
- Identified and analysed the use of examples from different cultures, linking these to credibility and global perspective.
- Demonstrated awareness of form, explaining how the hybrid structure supports both engagement and clarity.
- Analysed structural organisation effectively, including the use of subheadings and thematic progression, noting that 'paragraphs are strategically segmented to cover distinct thematic elements'.
- Explored the function of subheadings, including their role in guiding the reader and contributing to tone, with some recognising their dual nature (dramatic, metaphorical, and suggestive of mystery and fantasy).
- Analysed structural progression, including movement from general cultural references to more specific examples and explanations.
- Explored rhetorical devices such as rhetorical questions (for example, 'What explains their extraordinary prevalence ...?'), explaining how these engage the reader and guide interpretation.
- Analysed the use of juxtaposition, recognising how contrasting ideas (for example, cultural importance vs threatening nature) highlight complexity and encourage reader interpretation 'This juxtaposes their important cultural identity with their historically ominous, threatening presence and serves to highlight this complex idea'.
- Demonstrated detailed language analysis, exploring connotations of phrases such as 'scaly monsters' and 'serpentine', linking these to the portrayal of dragons as both fearsome and fascinating.
- Identified tone and register effectively, including references to a 'semi-formal register and a mystical, narrative tone'.
- Recognised elements of 'archaic register', linking this to mythological and legendary contexts and, in some cases, to nostalgia and storytelling traditions 'cautionary tales'.
- Used precise linguistic terminology and well-integrated quotations.
- Clearly linked language, structure and form to meaning and reader effect.

Limited responses

- Focused primarily on content, often summarising ideas such as 'beliefs and traditions of dragons across the world' without analysing how these ideas were presented.
- Made generalised or vague comments (for example, 'this creates interest') without explanation.

- Demonstrated imprecise or incorrect use of linguistic terminology.
- Misidentified features, showing uncertainty in linguistic knowledge (for example, describing alliteration as 'repetition of the letter m' rather than recognising it as repetition of initial consonant sounds).
- Incorrectly identified personification, applying it to living beings rather than to inanimate objects or abstract concepts.
- Adopted a paragraph-by-paragraph or content-driven approach, leading to summary rather than analysis.
- Provided limited or poorly integrated textual evidence.
- Showed limited awareness of structural organisation at whole-text level.
- Did not consistently link features to meaning, audience or purpose.
- Relied on feature spotting rather than sustained analytical commentary.

ENGLISH LANGUAGE

Paper 9093/22 Writing
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Key messages

What candidates did well

- Candidates managed their time carefully, allocating an equal amount of time for each section of the paper.
- Candidates read instructions in the questions and followed them carefully, to ensure that they wrote relevant content in the correct form.
- Candidates were aware of the need for clear paragraphing in their responses, including paragraphing for direct speech.
- Candidates planned their ideas and organised extended responses logically.
- Candidates checked their response and edited them for clarity, accuracy, and completeness.
- Candidates showed an overall secure grasp of technical accuracy, particularly in spelling, punctuation, and tense use.

What candidates needed to improve

- Some candidates needed to provide more accuracy in sentence construction, spelling, grammar, and punctuation.
- Some candidates needed to strengthen consistency in tone, tense and register to enhance clarity and form across tasks.
- Some candidates need to write more legibly and clearly to ensure communication was not impeded.
- Some candidates needed to proofread carefully, particularly for accurate sentence demarcation and for tense confusion/inconsistency. Such oversights impeded, sometimes seriously, the overall sense of fluency and cohesion.
- Some candidates needed to strengthen their writing by shaping material more selectively and purposefully, instead of attempting to include too broad a range of details.
- Candidates needed to strengthen their language analysis by focusing on the effects of specific words rather than merely naming devices.
- Some candidates needed to be able to be consistent in their use of tenses, some switching from past to present (or vice versa) in the same paragraph and even, sometimes, in the same sentence.
- Some candidates needed to be more assured in the conventions of punctuating dialogue.

Comments on specific questions

Section A

Question 1

(a) Comprehensive responses

- Candidates wrote clearly, with accuracy and control of grammar and structure.
- Candidates used a range of vocabulary and sentence types including some complex lexis and structures.
- Candidates expressed their passion for singing and belonging to a choir through considered language choices.
- Candidates used coherent paragraphing, effective topic sentences, and a consistent register.
- Candidates demonstrated an understanding of the required format, showing awareness of audience and tone.
- Candidates utilised appropriate speech conventions, such as a salutation and conclusion, direct address, rhetorical devices, and audience engagement.

- Candidates began with a direct address and attempted to engage their audience in the opening paragraph.
- Candidates consistently used a range of language to create a compelling voice, which gave their responses a personal and engaging tone.
- Candidates used personal anecdotes effectively, personalising the experience of being in a choir and relating its benefits to the audience.
- Some candidates adopted contrasting tone of voice from the start and close of their speech to reflect a change in mood: 'In the beginning I was petrified/Every rehearsal has been wonderful and has helped me to gain confidence'.
- Candidates consistently engaged their audience by employing a range of rhetorical devices. Hypophora was effectively used by some candidates: 'Is it difficult singing in a choir? Of course. Every time we rehearse, we sound better.'
- Candidates offered developed, cohesive responses with connectives at the beginning of paragraphs to signpost the progression of thought: 'Additionally, this hobby assists in helping one find connections.'
- Candidates engaged the audience with a range of rhetorical devices, including rhetorical questions: 'Have you ever experienced stage fright? The unshakable feeling that makes your stomach sick and forces your fingers to fiddle – an unexplainable fear of being seen, heard, and exposed.'

Limited responses

- Candidates needed to focus more on basic grammar and punctuation, including sentence demarcation.
- Some candidates needed to develop their responses fully, such as in short paragraphs like this: 'Additionally, it's a hobby after school that ensures you bettering yourself of something.'
- Some candidates needed to provide responses with greater accuracy in spelling, grammar, and punctuation: 'Singing song doesn't just kill you time. It soothes mind keeping calm and peaceful.'
- Some candidates needed to find ways to engage the audience using a range of rhetorical devices rather than using a very simple address: 'Hello students.'

(b) Comprehensive responses

- Candidates identified a range of features such as register, structure, pronouns, degree of formality, similes, rhetorical questions, semantic fields, and connectives.
- Candidates were able to exemplify such features and provide some convincing analyses of their purpose and effects.
- Candidates demonstrated knowledge and understanding of key linguistic terminology.
- Some candidates used a Point, Evidence, Analysis format to analyse the form, structure, and language of their responses to **Question 1(a)**.
- Candidates expanded on selected features of language, ensuring that comments and analysis were linked to audience and purpose.
- Candidates insightfully explored figurative language, such as metaphors depicting their choir experience as a 'journey' or 'path,' and explained how these enhanced engagement and clarity.
- Candidates used relevant terminology consistently and confidently, using language precisely and appropriately, as in this example, where the analysis is detailed and focused: 'My use of triple structure in the phrase 'communities, people and even yourselves' is powerful as it zooms out from something broader like communities to 'yourselves' which relays the scale of impact that the choir can create.'

Limited responses

- Some candidates summarised or paraphrased what they had written in **Question 1(a)**, rather than analysing their choices.
- Some candidates provided brief, underdeveloped responses, limited in range.
- Some candidates wrote very short or very general answers, listing lots of features without adequate analysis of their effects, such as in these two examples: 'I used a lot of different punctuation in my text, like commas and question marks and !'; 'These punctuations make the text look more clearer.'
- Some candidates successfully named linguistic devices yet only made a limited attempt to explain how a technique's use furthered the writer's purpose, as in this example: 'The use of

triple 'effort, practice and hardworking' allows the audience to see it can be a bit difficult but the triples allows the audience to persuade and make them reflect about it.'

- Some candidates merely listed linguistic features they said they had used without any supporting evidence, for example: 'My speech contained figures of speech such as similes.'
- Some candidates used incorrect terminology, for example showing confusion of the difference between 'metaphor' and 'simile'.
- Some candidates needed to be more precise in their discussion of sentence types and lengths of paragraph, avoiding being too general: 'The structure of my speech is paragraphs of varying length.'

Section B

Question 2

Comprehensive responses

- Candidates showed accuracy in spelling, grammar, and punctuation as well as in the use of complex lexis and structures.
- Candidates identified relevant apps, for example, apps that helped users limit their screen time.
- Candidates understood the conventions of a review, providing evaluative comments in the body of the response and summative comments at the end: 'Overall, I can confirm that Opal works and it works well. I would recommend the app to anyone with the money, the lack of self-control and the urge to be better.'
- Candidates identified a wide range of features and functions, demonstrating knowledge of design, user experience, speed, and price, for example: 'After three months, the cost is \$50 per month, quite reasonable when compared to the information it is providing to you.'
- Candidates displayed a clear, effective sense of voice, connecting with the reader using second person pronoun.
- Some candidates were quite sophisticated in their expression: for example, one concluding remark read, 'I have high expectations of what this app will be in a few years from now, as it embodies two vital concepts for an app: simplicity and effectiveness.'
- Candidates presented well organised responses, mostly positive but with some provisos to present a balanced answer. For example, 'However, if there is one thing that could be improved about the app, it is the user data collected.'

Limited responses

- Some candidates needed to demonstrate greater accuracy in punctuation, spelling and grammar: 'This project was in development for decades and millions of dollar spent every single year.'
- Some candidates needed to provide greater cohesion by using appropriate connectives to link paragraphs, rather than moving abruptly from one paragraph to another.

Question 3

Comprehensive responses

- Candidates showed familiarity with the subject in terms of knowledge of child development, which helped to create relevant content.
- Candidates provided a balanced argument, exploring the pros and cons of each position and then coming to a decision at the end of their essay: 'Thus, in conclusion, we suggest an optimal age of 5, which carefully balances the two contrasting needs of unstructured learning and social skill development.'
- Candidates explored political, cultural, and economic contexts, and the education policies of different countries, in support of their argument: 'China's education minister argued that in rural China, where students start school at four...'
- Candidates employed an appropriate academic tone and suitably complex lexis and structures in their essay: 'Drawing on this landmark study, we can infer that unstructured learning is more likely to produce individuals that question what is presented as given knowledge.'
- Some candidates made use of expert opinion, for example: 'Researchers have shown that learning another language before the age of four furthers the probability that people can retain the language and use it better throughout life.'
- Candidates structured their responses logically, ensuring key points could be clearly identified by the reader. Reliance on 'data' or 'studies' did not dominate; rather candidates consistently expressed their own point of view.

Limited responses

- Some candidates needed to evidence greater accuracy in grammar: 'According to an European Studies in 2023 in which they see children of which age are able to grab most things...'
- Some candidates needed to plan the response carefully to develop a cohesive argument and to avoid presenting a fragmented series of points.
- Some candidates wrote in a register which was too informal for an essay: 'The best age would be the age of 4 ... but can differ from a kid to another and that's why we shouldn't fix an age of starting school.'
- Some candidates relied heavily on invented studies, thereby losing sight of their own point of view and voice.
- Some candidates needed to use more complex lexis and structures.

Question 4

Comprehensive responses

- Candidates demonstrated accuracy in their use of grammar, spelling, and punctuation.
- Candidates provided convincing scenarios leading to credible conclusions with the realisation that a mistake had been made: 'In that moment he realised, Hotel Ledvil? No ... Devil.'
- Candidates used language effectively with complex vocabulary and structures to create drama and suspense, for example: 'The receptionist was a queerly thin man, his bony, arched nosed holding a pair of specs as his skeleton-like fingers tapped at a computer.'
- Candidates interwove description with dialogue, moving the story forward with a sense of place and character.
- Candidates consistently focused on developing drama and suspense, often alerting the reader to some abnormal features in the hotel.
- Candidates displayed a strong sense of purpose from the outset, with a strong sense of voice in the central character.

Limited responses

- Some candidates needed to provide a complete story and to avoid unconvincingly inconclusive endings.
- Candidates needed to develop a clearer voice in their stories.
- Some candidates needed to avoid too much plot at the expense of providing a convincing setting, some character development and credible dialogue.
- Some candidates needed to be more accurate with their grammatical constructions: 'The hotel have a massive doors and inside it has vintage chandelier.'
- Some candidates needed to punctuate dialogue appropriately, for example, avoiding misplaced commas and quotation marks.
- Some candidates needed to avoid unnecessary tense switching between present tense and past simple: 'Xavier felt the bile form in his throat as he rushes to the bathroom and bends over.'

ENGLISH LANGUAGE

Paper 9093/32 Language Analysis
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Key messages

What candidates did well

- Comprehensive responses observed the requirement for clear paragraphing in order to present a logical sequence of ideas.
- Comprehensive responses were sustained and covered a good level of development of ideas.
- Comprehensive responses provided a full explanation of why theoretical examples quoted were relevant to the selection of material from the texts provided.

What candidates needed to improve

- Some limited responses were brief, especially in **Section B**, indicating that improvement could be made in time management during the examination.
- Some limited responses did not provide explanations of why a theoretical example quoted was relevant to the analysis presented.
- Some limited responses used technical terminology inaccurately.

Comments on specific questions

Section A

Question 1

Comprehensive responses

- Most candidates understood the use of the medial S, relating its obsolescence to the evolution of printing technology.
- Most candidates focused extensively on graphology and punctuation, which was useful when it led to development with reference to the printing press, capitalisation, and sentence length.
- Some comprehensive responses linked sentence length to the association between long Latinate sentence structures and the demonstration of evolving opportunities for education and resulting status.
- Most candidates positioned Text A as Early Modern English and acknowledged Caxton's printing press and Johnson's dictionary as markers of evolving standardisation. Some added reference to the Industrial Revolution and greater access to printed material.
- In analysis of Text B, most candidates remarked on the shift to financial collocates. Some linked this shift to the 20th and 21st century focus on capitalism or income and expenditure.
- In analysis of Text C, some candidates linked the use of 'at pleasure' with the difference in formal register used in A and a few attempted to argue that 'if you like' rose in frequency in the 20th century in response to a growing informality of language according to Goodman or Fairclough.
- In analysis of Text C, a few candidates included the argument that the use of direct address, 'you', signifies the linguistic progress in instructional texts towards authors acting more like allies to those being instructed.
- Some comprehensive responses demonstrated a good level of synthesis of ideas from all three texts.

Limited responses

- Some candidates confused the medial S as a phonological rather than a graphological feature.
- Most candidates remarked on how the approach of the writer of Text A was different from that seen in contemporary cookbooks and included comments on the formal prose style, lengthy elaborations, and use of imperatives. Such comments demonstrated a narrative rather than analytical approach and candidates did not always provide evidence for their ideas.

- Most lexical analysis was based on the terms 'pare', 'Allum', 'augmented', 'Boilings', 'Apricocks', 'form'd', 'Stove' (Wood/fire), 'clear', 'pearled' and 'fair Water'.
- Most limited responses demonstrated misunderstanding of 'augmented' and incorrectly termed 'pare' as obsolete.
- Some candidates argued that the use of 'their' and 'them' to refer to inanimate walnuts would now be incorrect.
- In analysis of Text B, some candidates referred to change in meaning rather than collocation from one side of the chart to the other. For example, it was stated that 'drest' took on the meaning of 'paid'.
- In analysis of Text C, some candidates linked the use of 'if you like' with the internet and texting as if those came into being in the 1910s.
- Most limited responses discussed each of the three texts in sequence without synthesis of material from Texts B and C with selections from Text A.

Section B

Question 2

Comprehensive responses

- Some candidates demonstrated a clear understanding of the ways in which the mother scaffolded the child into Vygotsky's Zone of Proximal Development.
- Most candidates placed Bipti in the post-telegraphic stage of language acquisition and developed their response by assigning her to the preoperational stage according to Piaget.
- Most candidates referenced Skinner in terms of the mother's reinforcement technique. Most candidates also cited Vygotsky, with some adding Nelson and Bellugi to develop their discussions.
- Most comprehensive responses first selected and analysed the selected material and then supported ideas with citations of theoretical examples.
- Some candidates selected material from the transcription to describe how Bipti's use of language evidenced some of Halliday's functions, usually including personal and regulatory.
- Some noted the missed auxiliary on line 9 as a virtuous error in line with Chomsky's notion of universal grammar.
- Most candidates commented on Bipti's ease with turn taking and fulfilment of adjacency pairs.
- Further comprehensive analysis was made of her emerging phonological competence with some loss of consonant cluster and transposition. Her repetition of her own errors was assigned to Berko and Brown's study of the Fis phenomenon in some developed analysis.
- Most candidates commented on the mother's recasting, corrections, and modelling, accurately describing these features as characteristic of child-directed speech and evidence of Bruner's Language Acquisition Support System, including scaffolding.

Limited responses

- Some candidates described the Zone of Proximal Development without supplying evidence from the transcription.
- Some positioned Bipti in the telegraphic stage of acquisition yet contradicted their argument by selecting material from the transcription which demonstrated a greater facility with language production.
- Some responses introduced names of linguists or theories with only a limited reference to the language presented in the transcription.
- In consideration of Vygotsky and the Initial-Response-Feedback (IRF) chain of communication between the mother and Bipti, a few candidates selected material which did not evidence IRF exchange.
- Where Halliday's functions of language were introduced, a few candidates used the incorrect term, often mistaking the regulatory function for the heuristic function.
- Some candidates misinterpreted Bipti's repeated use of /teks/ as 'takes' and discussed as a virtuous error, despite the mother's correction in the following utterance.
- Some candidates misinterpreted the voiced filler, 'um' as a stutter or as backchannelling.
- Some limited responses relied on reference to the transcription key as a reminder of characteristic features which may have been present in the transcription instead of deep reading of the linguistic features which were most evident there. This approach led to limited comment on pause, interruption, paralinguistic features, and contextual information, some of which had been present.

ENGLISH LANGUAGE

Paper 9093/42 Language Topics
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Key messages

What candidates did well

- Comprehensive responses were sustained, with reference to a number of specific points raised in the texts provided in both sections of the question paper.
- Comprehensive responses presented ideas in a logical sequence of ideas. Clear paragraphing was headed with appropriate discourse markers.
- Comprehensive responses supported ideas with relevant examples from linguistic theory. Theoretical examples were explained fully.

What candidates needed to improve

- A few candidates made frequent reference to theoretical examples and only infrequent reference to the ideas contained in the texts provided leaving an imbalanced overall response.
- Some limited responses did not provide explanations of why a theoretical example quoted was relevant to the analysis presented.
- Some limited responses were brief, especially in **Section B**, indicating that improvement could be made in time management during the examination.

Comments on specific questions

Section A

Question 1

Comprehensive responses

- Most comprehensive responses presented a balance of ideas from the text provided and reference to ideas gained from the candidates' wider study.
- Comprehensive responses made reference to each of the three 'compensatory measures' described in the text and tended to argue as to why they would not be feasible.
- Some comprehensive responses were developed by discussion of why one of the 'compensatory measures' may be more feasible than the others, usually the one pertaining to large language models (artificial intelligence) in scientific publications.
- The most common linguistic theories which were used in support were Braj Kachru's notions of Circles of English, Robert Phillipson's linguistic imperialism, different studies by David Crystal, Jennifer Jenkins' ideas on English as a lingua franca, and Ann Pakir's concept of English as a killer language.
- Most comprehensive responses provided an adequate explanation of how any cited conceptual models and approaches to linguistic study were relevant to the argument.
- English as a gatekeeper was commonly referred to in comprehensive responses, with development and connection to the text.
- Comprehensive responses were also developed with reference to a wider variety of conceptual models and approaches. These included the establishment of new varieties of English, any perceived prestige of the English language, and methods for language revitalisation.

Limited responses

- Limited responses often referred to the concepts of English as a lingua franca, English as a killer language, language death, colonialism, prescriptivism and/or descriptivism and linguistic imperialism. Most limited responses did not attribute these concepts to specific linguistic theorists.
- The concepts above were not cited in relation to ideas selected from the text in some limited responses.

- Most limited responses began by providing a long introductory paragraph which detailed conceptual referencing without mention of the text provided. Such paragraphs often included statistical information which was inaccurate in a few limited responses.
- Limited responses often addressed only one of three 'compensatory measures' or listed them with little further development or argument.
- A few limited responses began to analyse the language of the text provided which was not a requirement of the question paper.

Section B

Question 2

Comprehensive responses

- Comprehensive responses included a number of specific points from the text provided including how and why the 'Leb' accent had been adopted by those without a Lebanese heritage and the ways in which social media platforms such as TikTok were enabling establishment and development of language and the self.
- Most comprehensive responses often included a wide variety of relevant conceptual references. These included relevant citation of Giles' Communication Accommodation Theory, Tajfel and Turner's Social Identity Theory, Kramarae's Muted Group theory, Milroy's ideas on social networking and Bernstein's elaborated and restricted codes. These were usually used with appropriately embedded quotes from the text.
- Where conceptual references were made, most comprehensive responses provided a full explanation of the reason for the candidates' selection.
- The different concepts of accent and dialect were discussed fully in comprehensive responses with some reference to how one's accent may imply language and power, with reference to Fairclough.
- The idea of Ismail's language not 'sound[ing] classy or sophisticated' was often referred to in comprehensive responses with support from Labov, to how linguistic prestige may be overt or covert, and how this might affect personal and social identity.

Limited responses

- Some limited responses began with a generalised introductory paragraph about the wider topic of language and the self without mention of the text provided.
- Limited responses tended to focus on accent as a facet of identity without further reference to other specific points made in the text provided.
- Some limited responses described social medial platforms such as TikTok in a way that was not always focused on the question frame.
- In some limited responses there was a reliance on models and approaches relevant to language acquisition and learning. To a limited extent, these references explained why Ismail's language may have been influenced by his Arabic heritage. Author attribution and full explanation of why the behaviourist or nativist approach was relevant would have made such responses more comprehensive.
- Some limited responses made reference to potential language death, colonialism or English as a lingua franca. Such references were not wholly relevant to the text presented in **Question 2** and would have been more securely placed in a response to **Question 1**.