



Units 3 and 4 English Language

Practice Exam Solutions

Stop!

Don't look at these solutions until you have attempted the exam.

Any questions?

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Section A

The responses below are intended as suggestions. Alternative answers to the ones below may be acceptable. Ask your teacher or tutor to look over your work if you are unsure. Marks allocated are indicated by a number in square brackets; for example, [1] indicates that the line is worth one mark.

Question 1

Discuss the use of listing in lines 2-5 of Text 1. Provide examples and refer to line numbers in your response.

- The listing that describes Wikipedia as "online, free to use for any purpose, and free of advertising" (lines 2-3) serves to highlight the accessibility of the product and thus suggest a value of equality associated with it [1].
- This list can be said to assist in promoting the social purpose of the text, communicating the values of accessibility and equality central to the product [1].
- The list spanning lines 3 to 5 serves to explain and intensify the scale of the Wikipedia project. This list contains a series of figures: "34 million volunteer-authored articles", "288 languages", and "457 million people" used to highlight the extent of the services provided [1].
- Contributing to the logical ordering of ideas, this list helps substantiate the claim made at the end of line 5, that Wikipedia is "one of the most popular sites in world", by establishing a series of facts. As such, listing can be considered as assisting the text's function of communicating information, which, cumulatively, supports the integrity of other ideas expressed [1].

[1] for correct identification of listing + [1] for comprehensive discussion of its purpose/effect = [2]

Question 2

Identify a form of anaphoric reference in lines 6-10 of Text 1 and discuss its effect. Refer to line numbers in your response.

- Lines 6 through 10 make repeated use of anaphoric reference, substituting the proper noun "Wikipedia" for the pronoun "it", as evident in the declarative sentence "it has become the largest collection of shared knowledge in human history" (lines 7-8) [1].
- This use of referencing assists in the creation of cohesion, allowing for clear logical ties between sentences and paragraphs. The full noun is used in lines 2 and 3, but is then substituted for "it" [1].
- This can be said to have an effect on the style of the text. Whilst the continued use of the full noun phrase may produce a rigid style and more formal register, the use of anaphoric reference allows effective communication without an exact restatement of the noun. As such, the style is softened and the register is lowered somewhat [1].

[1] for correct identification of an example of anaphoric reference + [1] for comprehensive analysis of its effect on the text = [2]

Question 3

Identify two sentence types used in Text 1 and discuss how they contribute to the text's function. Refer to line numbers in your response.

- Text 1 features use of both interrogative and declarative sentence types, which support the central function of providing important information clearly [1].
- By using an interrogative sentence such as 'In a nutshell, what is Wikipedia?' (1) followed by the declarative sentences of lines 2 through 18, the creators of the text simulate a conversation [1].
- The interrogative on line 1 captures the overall purpose of the text succinctly and signposts to the audience what kind of information will follow, allowing the audience to understand it more easily [1].

- The interrogatives also serve to embody the target audience, representing their hypothetical attempts to understand the Wikipedia project by using the sentence type expected of such a scenario [1].
- Subsequently, declarative sentences such as "Wikipedia is the world's largest and most popular encyclopaedia" (line 2) are used to efficiently communicate information from the Wikimedia Foundation [1].

([1] for accurately identifying a sentence type + [1] for comprehensive discussion of how a sentence type contributes to function) X2 = [4]

Question 4

How do the lexical choices of Text 2 contribute to the register? Referring to line numbers, discuss using at least two examples.

- The lexis of Text 2 contributes to a mostly formal register. This is evident through use of lexemes such as "disseminate" (line 9), which is taken from a 'more prestigious' sociolect and reflects the linguistic sophistication often expected in texts of an official nature [1].
- Further, the use of the verb "disseminate", along with other lexical items such as "content" (line 9), are drawn from the domain of media and communications [1].
- By using specialist language (jargon) typically reserved for formal contexts and lexis associated with a higher sociolect, the lexical choice of Text 2 contributes to a largely formal register [1].
- The lexis of Text 2 reflects the complex nature of register, suggesting both degrees of formality and informality. Entitled "Terms of Use" (line 1) - a collocation associated with official documents and a formal register - the lexis of the text suggests a degree of formality [1].
- However, this is in conflict with the casual style and less formal register informed by use of such lexis as "handy" (line 4) [1].
- While 'useful' might be considered a more formal alternative, the use of this adjective as well as other simple lexis such as 'legal language' (line 5) suggests that, although in a context commonly associated with formality, the register of this text has elements of informality [1].
- This informal language might serve to reduce social distance between the source and the audience so that readers have a more positive opinion about Wikipedia, while simultaneously associating it with knowledge and authority because of the adoption of an otherwise formal register [1].

Other potentially formal lexis: Disclaimer (line 3), human-readable (line 2), public domain (line 8), civility (line 17), infrastructure (line 19), Terms of Use and Policies (line 20), open license (line 25), constitute (line 28)

Other potentially informal lexis; "human-readable" (line 2), "user-friendly" (line 4), personal pronouns such as "our" (line 5) and "you" (line 10)

([1] for accurately identifying an example of lexis and describing its level of formality) X2 + [1] for comprehensive discussion of their influence of the register of the text = [3]

Question 5

Explain how coherence is achieved in Text 2. Discuss with at least two examples from the text, referring to line numbers in your response.

- Choices of formatting contribute to the coherence of the second text. This is evident in the use of bold and non-bold text [1].
- Here, the title "Terms of Use" (line 1) as well as other central ideas - the fragments on lines 6, 10, 14 and 23 - are shown in bold text to highlight their importance, suggesting them to be broad concepts to which the other text relates, allowing readers to easily navigate the text [1].
- Logical ordering of ideas contributes to the coherence of this text [1].
- For example the "disclaimer" (line 3) appears before the bulk of the text, contextualizing the information that follows, thus creating a logical succession of ideas that in turn contributes to coherence. Putting the disclaimer first is also a typical way of beginning many legal documents, so this conventional ordering allows the audience to navigate more easily through the text [1].
- The Terms of Use described in the text follow a clear logical order, with statements about what readers are "free to" do, such as "read and print" (line 10) followed later by the qualifying ideas described under the subheading "with the understanding that" (line 23), creating a coherent text [1].
- Syntactic patterning, such as parallelism, is used in this text, strengthening the cohesion and subsequently contributing to coherence. This is evident in lines 11 through 13, where the pattern of two verbs and a conjunction is repeated [1].
- Here, the symmetry between ideas such as "Read and Print" (line 11) and "Share and Reuse" (line 12) highlights the relationship between the ideas, as all actions users of Wikimedia products are free to do, thus strengthening logical connections [1].

[1] for accurately identifying an example + [1] for providing a comprehensive discussion of its role on achieving coherence) X2 = [4]

Section B

The responses below are intended as suggestions. Alternative answers to the ones below may be acceptable. Ask your teacher or tutor to look over your work if you are unsure.

Identity

Within this text, the linguistic choices of the interlocutors exemplify the range of identities they represent and seek to construct. For example, lexical choice of both Cox and Joshi can be considered as expressions of their professional and personal identities as highly educated academics. Using jargon from the semantic fields of science and mathematics, such as 'astronomers' (line 15), 'data' (line 17), 'infinite universes' (line 65) and 'sulphuric environments' (line 63), both speakers project identities of educated individuals.

In contrast, Richard Gill's linguistic choices in this text may well be interpreted as an attempt to construct an identity of one who is not highly educated in the sciences, yet passionate nonetheless for learning and curiosity. The juxtaposition between the piece of jargon 'microbes' and the highly informal euphemism to 'get off on', as well as the similar opposition found in the utterance 'sulphuric stuff' (line 106), suggest that Gill is projecting an identity of being an outsider to the particular academic professions that preside over the question of life in the universe – and potentially one more relatable to audiences. However, though his lexical choices may suggest an identity differing from the professional academic ones created by Cox and Joshi, Gill's prosody nonetheless communicates his enthusiasm and passion for the discussion. Using emphatic stress on the verbs 'love' and 'talk' (line 102), the speaker emphasises his strong positive feelings towards conversations such as that in the transcript. Further, using rising intonation, which is often used during lists on the adjective 'privileged/' (line 103), Gill's speech implies subtly that there are numerous unspoken benefits of engaging in such discussion.

Manner

In addition to being characteristic of unplanned spoken discourse, the instances of overlapping speech and similar conversational features provide insight into the nature of relationships represented. This is evident when Tony Jones and Brian Cox speak simultaneously. Here, Jones suggests that viewers aren't interested in things 'shed from asteroids' (line 36), while Cox makes multiple attempts to take the floor, highlighted by the many false starts and repetitions such as 'oh no but it wou- it would be fas-' (line 37). Ultimately, Cox secedes to the authority of the host, while Jones' increasingly heightened speech, evidenced by the intensifying effect of elongated vowel sound in 'know' (line 30), reflects his assertion of authority as the individual governing the direction of discussion. In many contexts, vying for the floor in this way could be considered as a breach of social harmony; yet, here it reflects an assertion of authority, which, given the setting and function of the text as a live informational and entertaining television broadcast, is accepted.

Further, linguistic features such as these are manifestations of the host's topic management and control over turn-taking, and thus contextual authority. With a simple linguistic cue, Jones can be seen to manage the direction of the conversation from the beginning of the transcript, saying 'Brian we'll start with you' (line 1). This trend continues throughout the text, with the similarly concise question 'Nalini as a mathematician, what are the odds' (line 59) being used to cue another guest to take the floor, and the use of the discourse particle 'so' in line 34 to signal a change in the direction of the conversation. The way in which Jones takes the chance to speak to different guests and signposts the movement of the discourse reflect his important role in the structure of the text, as well as the authority expected from a host, whose position of power is asserted and maintained in order to achieve the function of the text: entertaining and informing by incorporating the views of a range of people.

This manner of power relationship between Jones and the panellists does not only show in terms of direction, but also encouragement. This is evidenced by Jones' use of minimal responses such as the

non-verbal utterance 'mm' found on lines 74 and 94, and the rising intonation at the end of the utterance 'you probably wouldn't want to have dinner with them' (line 67), which, mimicking the sound of a question, encourages response.

Setting and Function

The interlocutors use linguistic strategies that assist the pursuit of the text's function and are indicative of its setting. This is particularly evident in the prosodic features employed to ensure information is clearly and effectively communicated. For example, Cox makes frequent use of emphatic stress to intensify a section of utterance and communicate its significance, as suggested by the stress placed on expressions such as '20 billion' (line 17) and 'billions' (line 20). Here, the heightened stress highlights the enormity of the number and, in the context of the discourse, also the amount of 'potentially habitable worlds' (line 20). Similarly, Cox uses stress to draw attention to function words that are important to an audience's understanding of his discourse, clear in the stress placed on 'have' in 'there may have been life' (line 12). Signifying the importance of noting that there could have been life on Mars in the past, Cox is able to emphasise the link between his use of past and future tense, communicating that there 'may still be life' (line 12). The use of stress can, therefore, be said to be employed in order to enhance the informative function of the text, as well as fulfilling the requirements of the specific setting, with such television broadcasts relying on clear communication. These same intentions are perhaps also evident in the manipulation of volume and tempo by multiple interlocutors; Cox's slow tempo when saying 'I suspect that there may be microbes around all over the place' (line 5) and 'either we are alone (.) or we are not' (line 48), or Jones' increasing volume at line 96 can be interpreted as prosodic variation employed to draw emphasis to a particular idea, and thus aid communication for the sake of audience comprehension.

As a largely unplanned spoken discourse, this text features many non-fluency features. The use of discourse particles can be seen as a strategy for holding the floor in this text. For example following a pause, Joshi uses the pause filler 'ah' (line 76) in an effort to hold the floor, filling what would otherwise be a lengthier silence with an utterance that allows her to consider the direction of her speech whilst maintain a flow of discourse. Similarly, having been asked to respond first to the question, Cox uses the pause filler 'um' three times in as many lines (lines 2, 3, 4) to maintain continuous discourse and fill moments of hesitation in order to not surrender the floor to another interlocutor.

Pauses are common for most of the interlocutors, such as Cox's pause in 'there are (.) something like 20 billion (..) earth-like planets' (line 17), Jones' similar pause 'microbes trapped in (..) Martian ice' (line 35), or in Joshi's utterance 'we just have to have a (..) bigger imagination' (line 62). Additionally, false starts and repetitions occur frequently in this text, suggestive of its unplanned nature. For example, Cox's speech over lines 55-56 exemplifies such non-fluency features, with the utterance 'B-but i-if we're not- if they're not then w-we'll-' consisting of multiple false starts, stuttering and repetitions being followed by another change in direction with the question 'how will we know' (line 56). With so many non-fluency features, the interlocutors of this text demonstrate a mutual tolerance of such language. Thus, the features of non-fluency and strategies to deal with them evident in this text are reflective of the setting: a live, largely unplanned television broadcast.

Social Purpose

Prosodic features in this text can perhaps be interpreted as attempts to maintain social harmony and promote values central to the function of the discourse. Using rising intonation after the utterance 'talk about this issue/' (line 77), Joshi makes use of an intonation pattern associated with questioning and is, therefore, inviting others to give input on the 'issue' and her opinions of it. This is reflective of a desire for cooperation and social harmony, which is also suggested by the frequent laughter – such as at lines 38, 44 and 69 – through which both the studio audience and panellists signal their recognition of speakers. Indeed, the overall structure of the conversation suggests a high level of tolerance and respect, with

many lengthy turns, such as Cox's speech spanning lines 1-33, perhaps suggesting a cooperative environment in which interlocutors are able to develop complex ideas, while the authority of the host allows Jones to also strive for equality by ensuring that other panellists have a chance to speak.

Section C

Answers are not provided for this section as a range of responses are acceptable. Ask your teacher or tutor to look over your work and suggest improvements.