ENGLISH LANGUAGE

Units 3 & 4 – Written Examination

TSSM™
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2014 Trial Examination

SOLUTIONS

SECTION A:

Question 1

1 mark for correctly identifying the type and another for a clear explanation of a function.

The text type is a web show; the mode is spoken and presumably it was filmed live and posted on a website. The function of the text is primarily expressive (Thorne) in that it is meant to entertain the audience. Another function is referential (Thorne) in that it is explaining how Andy Biersack's injury came about.

Question 2

1 mark for each labelled example with line number

Note that this question asked for line numbers and examples, not just quotes.

Examples non fluency features evident in this text are:

- hesitation as signaled by the use of three ellipsis markers in brackets in line 3

- use of discourse markers such as 'Ah' and 'well' on line 2 reflect the spontaneous nature of this speech event

- a false start/ repair is evident on line 13 "And what are people (.) So far what are people bringing you" as DJ rephrases his question

- repetition is evident on L12 "Yes.Yes." This may be viewed as a filler.

Question 3

4 marks = excellent 3 = very good 2= ok 1= weak

Must have a feature from two different subsystems for 4 marks

This text is towards the informal end of the spectrum as evidenced by examples such as:

- use of reductions eg L4 'cos' (lexicology/morphology)

- use of taboo eg L4 'shit' (semantics)

- use of discourse particles such as Ah' L2 and 'Uh' L5 are more commonly found in unscripted, informal contexts. (discourse)

- discourse markers such as 'you know' L16 and 'like' L21

- use of slang eg 'a bunch of batman tattoos' as opposed to Standard English which would be more like 'a not inconsiderable number' (semantics)

Question 4

2 marks for clearly identifying each example and giving a SE equivalent

Answers might include:

use of slang eg 'a bunch of batman tattoos' as opposed to Standard English which would be more like 'a not inconsiderable number' (semantics)

NB students can use this as an example for q3 and q4

use of beef as a verb to mean complain eg "you can't beef" L37 would be more like "you can't complain" in Standard English

Question 5

4 marks = excellent 3 = very good 2= ok 1= weak

Must have two features with explanations to qualify for 4 marks

prosodic features with a link to function include:

use of rising pitch in line 1 " a copy?"/ signals that DJ is asking AB a question and is thus relinquishing the floor. This serves the function of an interview as there are supposed to be questions and answers.

laughter features on line 11 and this is classed as a prosodic feature. It functions here to express pleasure at the response and is therefore a supports the positive face needs of AB

there is stress evident, for example, on the lexical item 'Yes' on L13. This, along with the fact that it is repeated, serves to emphasise the affirmative nature of the response

falling intonation on L34 'a bunch of ribs\' suggests that AB is downplaying the significance of his injuries whilst handing the floor over to DJ

SECTION B: EXAMPLE OF A HIGH-RANGE RESPONSE

A basic mark scheme /15 (which can be doubled to a mark out of 30) would be:
1-3 A sentence or two/ a few sentences 4-5 very weak (a few paragraphs, v short) 6-7 weak
8-9 ok 10-11 good 12-13 very good/ highly competent 14-15 excellent

The item entitled 'FAT-BUSTING BRAZILIAN UNDIES!!!' is an advertisement which featured in The Age's Good Weekend Magazine in June 2010. The primary function of the text is to persuade the reader to purchase the product and the target audience is likely to be women of all ages. Presumably, SCALA are a clothing company who have paid an advertising agency to design the text. Evident within this conative (Thorne) piece, the unnamed author(s) employs graphic, graphological and linguistic elements, including photographs, varying font size and jargon respectively.

Graphically, the use of features such as attractive models, 'technical' diagrams, contrast, text 'bubbles' and underlining all serve to draw the reader to the text and act as a visual stimulant. Key concepts and ideas are reiterated and the 'wall of text' is broken up. Both the use of models and the before and after photographs, although clichéd, function to offer 'proof' of the product's positive qualities.

Similarly, graphological features such as the emboldening of text, capitalisation and varying font size/ style draw the reader in. Positives such as the title are large, capitalised and in bold, whereas content which is considered to be less important is placed in smaller text (eg 'not all styles are available'). Italicising lexemes such as 'scientifically-proven' is another orthographic feature which ties into the overall function of the text.

Linguistically, the use of loaded lexicon is a key feature. Adjectives with positive connotations such as 'FAT-BUSTING BRAZILIAN UNDIES' and the alliterative 'sexy-silhouette' are used to reinforce the desirable characteristics of the 'shapewear'. The choice of BRAZILIAN is, of course, in itself evocative; the product would not have the same connotations if it was named after Latvia or Ireland, for example[1]. The euphemistic 'orange peel' serves to soften the (presumably repulsive) nature of cellulite or fat and 'the body's natural drainage system' is similarly coy. Verb phrases such as 'melt away … fat' and 'smooth out the skin' suggest that the process of losing weight is going to be very easy indeed.

A variety of sentence types are employed and this variety in itself serves to keep the content 'fresh'. The piece begins with declaratives which are useful for conveying information ('Scala BioPromise…size.'). Imperatives are employed as a kind of call to arms ('Start fighting') and reinforce a sense of urgency (Hurry!). Interrogatives ('The Scala Secret?') act as a rhetorical device and the use of exclamatives ('after 1 hour wearing BioPromise!', 'SELLING OUT FAST!') are an attempt to inject energy and excitement (if it wasn't there already!).

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[1] No offence to people from either of these great countries intended

The use of scientific/ pseudo- scientific jargon is another noticeable recurring feature in this advertisement. The prefix 'Bio' as in 'BioPromise' and 'BioCrystals', the use of initialisms such as FIRRs and terms such as 'cellular metabolism' are all jargonistic in nature. This adds a sense of credibility or legitimacy to the product and clearly ties in to the persuasive function of the piece.

The register of the text is not entirely formal, however; the listing of colloquial terms such as 'baby fat, jelly belly, muffin top', the use of case studies such as 'Anna' (who 'lost 11 cm from her waist') and abbreviations such as 'pic' (which is also parenthesized) all act to reduce the social distance between the writer and reader. References to the popular TV show 'Today Tonight' would also function to make this product an item that the target demographic can understand.

The text finishes in a transactional mode. Interestingly the 'dotted line' from the days of coupons (those under the age of 30 may need to Google this) is retained. Potential customers are urged to contact one of the many suppliers quickly in order to ensure that they get to own some 'shapewear' of their own. Again, the range of stores stocking the product, along with the other purchase methods, suits the persuasive function; the customer is being told that this product is legitimate, affordable and readily available.

Please note that this answer is around 650 words. There is no set 'formula' for a discourse analysis but students should attempt to explore language features with clear references to the subsystems.

SECTION C

Question 7

To what extent is the idea of a uniquely Australian language variety valid in the 21st century?

Essay responses may have explored key knowledge such as:

• the role of Standard and non-Standard English in Australian society

• ways in which a variety of Australian identities can be reflected in a range of historical and contemporary texts

• characteristics of Australian English in contrast to Englishes from other continents, in phonological, lexical, prosodic, and/or grammatical patterns

• features of Broad, General and Cultivated Australian English accents

• attitudes within society to different varieties of English, including prescriptivism and descriptivism

• the role of language in constructing national identity

• metalanguage to discuss varieties of Australian English.

Students may comment on areas such as accent, the influence of Americanisms and technology, ethnolects and their role, use of taboo and idiom, and changing values reflected in increasing use of P.C. language.

Question 8

Discuss the functions of jargon in a range of contemporary Australian contexts.

Essay responses may explore key knowledge such as:

• social and personal variation in language according to factors such as age, gender, occupation, interests, aspiration and education

• features of language that contribute to a sense of individual identity and group membership

• representations of individual and group identities in a range of historical and contemporary texts

• the ways in which the language of individuals and the language of groups is shaped by social expectations and community attitudes

• the ways in which people draw on their linguistic repertoire to gain power and prestige, including exploiting overt and covert norms

• the relationship between social attitudes and language choices

• metalanguage to discuss representations of identity in texts.

Students may comment on jargon within academic, medical, sporting or any other field. Stronger answers will recognise the range of uses for jargon. Jargon is used not merely to bamboozle or exclude but to increase efficiency, simplify complex ideas, act as euphemism, and create solidarity.

Question 9
Referring to a range of subsystems, discuss how one contemporary Australian has constructed their identity. Explain the range of attitudes that arise in response to this constructed identity.

Essay responses may explore key knowledge such as:
• the role of Standard and non-Standard English in Australian society
• social and personal variation in language according to factors such as age, gender, occupation, interests, aspiration and education
• features of language that contribute to a sense of individual identity and group membership
• ways in which a variety of Australian identities can be reflected in a range of historical and contemporary texts
• characteristics of Australian English in contrast to Englishes from other continents, in phonological, lexical, prosodic, and/or grammatical patterns
• features of Broad, General and Cultivated Australian English accents
• attitudes within society to different varieties of English, including prescriptivism and descriptivism
• the role of language in constructing identity
• the relationship between social attitudes and language choices
• metalanguage to discuss representations of identity in texts.
• metalanguage to discuss varieties of Australian English.
• the ways in which the language of individuals and the language of groups is shaped by social expectations and community attitudes

Students may or may not have focused on one of the individuals in the stimulus material. They may have covered spoken and/or written texts, idiolect, changing language to suit environments, the impact of culture and technology, the use of jargon and/or taboo, teenspeak, levels of formality and so on.

Marking Scheme

28–30 – Demonstrates a sophisticated understanding of the essay topic. Provides detailed discussion and supports key points with relevant examples or evidence.
Excellent analysis using metalinguistic tools accurately. Tightly structured with confident and assured use of paragraphs and topic sentences. Extensive vocabulary and accurate grammar, spelling and punctuation.

24–27 – Demonstrates a good understanding of the essay topic. Provides detailed discussion and supports key points with relevant examples or evidence. Very good analysis using metalanguage. Well structured and demonstrates skill in the use of paragraphs, topic sentences, vocabulary and accurate spelling, grammar and punctuation.

20–23 – Demonstrates a good understanding of the essay topic. Provides some detailed points of discussion and mostly supports these points with examples or evidence. Analysis of ideas is largely expressed in metalinguistic terms. Structure demonstrates appropriate use of paragraphs and topic sentences. Vocabulary and accurate grammar, spelling and punctuation are used correctly.

16–19 – Demonstrates some understanding of the topic. Provides some discussion and some points are supported by examples or evidence. Analysis is not sustained throughout the essay and metalanguage is used infrequently or incorrectly. Structure demonstrates appropriate use of paragraphs and topic sentences. Vocabulary and accurate grammar, spelling and punctuation are mainly used correctly.

12–15 – Demonstrates some understanding of the topic. Provides some discussion but the key points are often generalised, superficial or repetitive and often not supported with examples or evidence. More descriptive than analytical and metalanguage is rarely used or absent. Structure demonstrates some use of paragraphing and topic sentences. Vocabulary and accurate spelling, grammar and punctuation are used infrequently or inconsistently.

8–11 – Demonstrates a basic understanding of the topic. Provides limited discussion of two or three points which are not supported by examples or evidence. Descriptive rather than analytical and metalanguage is not used. Poor structure with little use of paragraphing and topic sentences. Vocabulary is basic and accurate grammar, spelling and punctuation are rarely used.

5–7 – Little understanding of the topic. Provides limited discussion of one or two points which are not supported by examples or evidence. Little or no analysis given and metalanguage is not used. Poorly structured writing with minimal use of paragraphing and topic sentences. Vocabulary is limited and accurate grammar, spelling and punctuation are rarely used or absent.

2–4 – No evidence of understanding of the topic. One or two points are mentioned but not supported by examples or evidence. No use of metalanguage. No use of paragraphs or topic sentences. Vocabulary is poor and accurate grammar, spelling and punctuation are mainly absent.

0–1 – No attempt is made to address the topic. Nothing, or only a few words, are written. No use of metalanguage, paragraphs and topic sentences. Accurate grammar, spelling and punctuation are absent.
Total 30 marks

General Tips for Essay Writing:

- Structure required is of expository/ discursive style essay, with introduction, main body and conclusion.

- Introduction needs to address all aspects of the essay topic and offer a perspective that will be followed through in the main body.

- The main body should be a series of paragraphs, each started with a topic sentence, generally explaining the key point of the paragraph in relation to the overall essay topic.

- The main body paragraphs should be supported and explained with linguistic discussion using metalanguage and a variety of examples supporting the points. These examples should be as current and original as the student can manage. Purely descriptive passages should be avoided.

- The use of short, direct quotations of words and phrases is to be encouraged.

- The conclusion should strongly finish with an overall message directly relevant to the topic and earlier points made.