

Moving from GCSE to A Level English Language

Welcome to A Level English Language!

Now that you've decided to study English Language at A level, you'll need to do a bit of preparation. This pack contains a programme of information sheets, activities and resources to prepare you to start your A level in September. You will complete the reading and tasks over the next few weeks of the term to put you in a great position for the start of your course in September.

The pack includes:

- Key pre-knowledge topics that are required for you to be successful in your course and activities associated with the topics which will test your key knowledge and understanding of the building blocks required to be successful in this subject.
- Projects to complete that will encourage you to think about what it means to study language at A Level, with material that will expose you to some of the areas of study that we consider at A Level
- Suggested reading and associated websites where you can research the topics you will be exploring in your A level course.

You will work through this booklet, following the instructions and completing the activities as required.

Section 1

In this section you will be introduced to the linguistic frameworks that you will use to analyse texts. Each sub-section will introduce the vocabulary you will need to describe what is going on in texts - some will be familiar; some will be very new. While each section will have definitions and examples, you will still need to read around each of the topics so that you develop your understanding and refresh your knowledge. But remember, this is an introduction. You will not be expected to be an expert. This is designed to give you a basic grounding in the subject and a bit of a head start. While you are completing the tasks and encountering this new vocabulary you will need to create a glossary – a dictionary if you like of definitions and examples of new terms as you come across them. This glossary will be a valuable resource as you get started and progress through your A Level course.

Section 2

Contains 3 mini-projects for you to complete.

Section 3

Contains information about useful texts and websites that you can explore to extend your knowledge and understanding of the subject.

Let's get started ...

One of the big differences between GCSE and A Level is the requirement for you to identify precisely what is going on in any text. To that end, we start by developing the metalanguage (language about language) which will enable you to do just that.

Word Classes

Take a look at the sentence below and think about what each individual word is doing and how it is operating to create meaning.

The small things in our lives can make a really big difference.

Let's look at some of these words in a bit more detail and think about how they work together.

- Two types of word stand out here: **adjectives** and **nouns**. These are the building blocks of many phrases and sentences and they tend to cluster together. In this sentence we can see that the nouns are: **'things'**, **'lives'** and **'difference'**. Why? Well, we can apply tests to see if they are nouns and we generally have some kind of sense that nouns name things (and you can't get much more 'thing-like' than the noun 'things'), people and places. One test we can apply and which works quite well here, is can you add an -s to make nouns plural? Here, both 'things' and 'lives' are already plurals, so that rule works fine, and it's easy to see that 'difference' could be turned into a plural too by adding an '-s'. 'Difference' is probably not quite as simple a noun as 'things', because it is an abstract noun, one that is used to refer to a concept or idea, rather than a physical object or person.
- Nouns also tend to have words like 'a', 'the' or 'an' somewhere in front of them, and we can see that 'the small things' and 'a really big difference' fit this quite well, with the **determiners** **'a'** and **'the'** lining up in front of them, not directly in front admittedly, but in front of other words which also help us identify 'things' and 'difference' as nouns.
- The words **'little'** and **'big'** are probably familiar to you from GCSE and earlier as **adjectives**. Adjectives are often termed descriptive words, but that is a bit vague, because nearly all words describe something if you think about it. At A Level we talk about these as words which modify. Here the adjectives modify the nouns they go in front of, changing them or adding more detail in some way.
- You will probably have noticed too that as well as an adjective modifying the noun 'difference', we also have the word 'really'. When you look at what this word does, it performs a similar function to an adjective, but this time it is modifying not a noun but an adjective. **'Really'** is an **adverb**. Adverbs are members of a quite useful word class, because they can do several different things. Adverbs can modify adjectives (usually being called adverbs of degree when they do this, because they tell us something about how much or how little the adjective is doing) but they also modify verbs (often being easily identifiable because of their '-ly' endings in these cases: 'quickly', 'slowly', 'silently', etc.). When you look at the section on phrases and modification, you'll see how these individual words can be grouped into larger units, but for now we will just deal with them as separate words.

- The other words in this sentence also need some attention. Sentences need verbs and this sentence has two of them working together (in what you will come to learn is a verb phrase). The **main verb** – the verb that carries the main meaning in the sentence – is ‘make’ and it is assisted by another verb, a **modal verb**, ‘can’. The modal verb works with the main verb to assist it in creating possibility, prediction or a degree of certainty, among other things. Think about the different modals you could put in front of a verb like ‘to happen’ and you can see what modals do: ‘it can happen’, ‘it might happen’, ‘it should happen’, ‘it will happen’. There are nine modal verbs in English and some others that function in a similar way but don’t quite follow the same rules, so this is one area of language study that it’s just best to get used to and memorise. The modal verbs are: ‘can’, ‘could’, ‘may’, ‘might’, ‘shall’, ‘should’, ‘will’, ‘would’ and ‘must’.
- That leaves us with two very small words: ‘in’ and ‘our’. ‘In’ is quite simple: it’s a **preposition**. These are part of a word class that tell us where things are, sometimes literally and sometimes metaphorically (like in the phrase ‘in a couple of days’). Prepositions are powerful words that help create prepositional phrases, groups of words that tell us where, when and how actions or events take place (again more of which you’ll be looking at as you go on to study at A Level).
- Finally, we come to ‘our’, which is slightly problematic, because on one level it functions exactly like ‘a’, and ‘the’ as a determiner, which is why many people call words like this **possessive determiners** because they tell us who or what the noun belongs to (‘our’ lives = the lives belonging to us). However, because lots of other words like ‘we’, ‘us’, ‘I’ and ‘she’ have similar properties and often take the place of nouns, they are sometimes called **possessive pronouns** too. Either will work fine for our purposes.

So, now you have a label for each of these word classes what can we do with the sentence we looked at earlier? Well, first of all, English Language A Level is a course that rewards you for what you know, so the simple act of being able to label a word in a text with its correct word class will get you some marks, but obviously you can’t just label every word because a) that would be boring and b) that would not really help you explain what the text means. So it’s important to think about how you can pick out the most significant language features to comment on. This will mean identifying the most important aspects of language as well as thinking about how and why contextual factors are important.

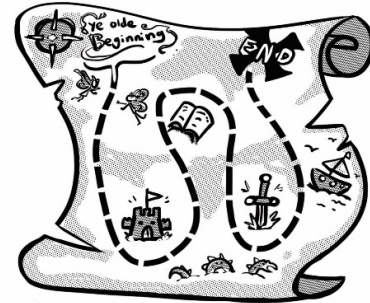
Perhaps in this sentence, it’s *the contrast between the two* adjectives that helps create a memorable impression from the sentence, or perhaps it’s *the level of doubt created by the modal verb ‘can’ (instead of ‘will’, perhaps)*. Maybe it’s *the use of the possessive determiner ‘our’ which suggests the reader is being grouped in with the writer as part of a collective whole, addressing us as one of them*.

This is what we start to think about as we move on at A Level. Beyond this decontextualised sentence, there are lots of other questions to consider. *Where does it come from? Was it spoken or written? Who produced it and for what purpose? Is there an image that the sentence is associated with? What comes before and after it?* As you look at real language in real contexts, you can start to use the different language frameworks in a more meaningful way to unpick how language creates meanings on different levels.

Let's start to work through some of the knowledge that you will need to be able to explain precisely what is going on in any text you are confronted with!

1. Introducing the key ideas and skills

There are some important areas that will be the basis of your study of the language of texts taken from everyday sources. You will have to become confident in using them. There are a number of linguistic frameworks and related concepts to come to grips with. There may be some that you recognise and some which are totally unfamiliar here. Don't panic – we will cover them in this unit and in more detail when we start the course. Don't forget to **start that glossary!**



Linguistic Frameworks

Lexis
Semantics
Grammar
Phonetics / Phonology
Pragmatics
Discourse
Graphology

Related Concepts

Register
Mode
Idiolect
Sociolect
Dialect
Accent
Representation

Linguistic Frameworks

Lexis - The **words** used in text or spoken data; the words, phrases and idioms of language.

Key Features may include:

- Choice of lexis, e.g. jargon (specialist terms), dialect, slang, colloquialisms, swearing, taboo terms, clichés, euphemisms, dysphemisms, archaisms (deliberate use of old-fashioned terms).
- Choices indicating factors such as levels of formality and education, e.g. elevated, literate, sophisticated, Latinate, unusual and polysyllabic terms (largely a reading or writing vocabulary) as opposed to simple, every-day, vernacular and monosyllabic (largely a speaking vocabulary).
- The concept of the lexeme.
- Types of word, e.g. compound, shortening, abbreviation, acronym, neologism, blend, loan word.
- Use of recurring lexis from particular lexical (semantic) fields.
- Collocations, whether common (predictable) or uncommon (deviant).
- Use of figurative language, e.g. metaphor, simile, pun, hyperbole, personification, metonymy, oxymoron.

Phew! Don't panic, just look up some of these words, **begin to compile a glossary** and learn a few for now. You might start with jargon and see if it applies to the list of words you have been given so far! Then go to the last bullet point and see how many you recognise from your GCSE studies.



All language users make choices about the words they use and the meanings they wish to convey. These choices can range from how formal or informal words are, how sophisticated or simple, through to the contrasts and similarities in meaning between the words they use.

In language study we refer to the words themselves as lexis and meanings as semantics (we'll look at this in a bit more detail next). Some lexis – core vocabulary – is known to about every user of English, while other words demand a higher level of education or knowledge.

Take a look at the following examples of words and phrases in texts 1 and 2.

1. grub/food/nourishment
2. go up/ascend and go down/descend

What do you notice about the levels of formality of the words or pairs of words?

- Are there situations where you think you might use one of these words instead of another?
- If so, what factors might influence you?
- If you were writing, do you think you might choose one over the other?



ACTIVITY 1

List as many words for 'drunk' as you can, trying to cover as many different registers (levels of formality and informality). Try to think about what your parents and grandparents would say, and also think about different contexts, e.g. what would you say to a police officer / teacher and what would you say to your friends.

Next you need to get your words in rank order, from most formal to least. Once that's done, try applying some lexical labels to them. Do you have examples for each of the following terms? If not, can you add some for the categories you don't yet have?

Formal	Technical	Informal
Colloquial	Impolite	Slang
Taboo	Dialect / Regional	'Posh' Slang
Old Fashioned	Older People's Slang	'Youth' Slang

ACTIVITY 2

Think of an event that has happened to you recently/or something that you have heard about.

Write three accounts of the event where you:

- 1) Describe what happened to the head teacher
- 2) Describe what happened to a school friend
- 3) Describe what happened to your grandparents

Write a paragraph or two explaining the differences in the lexis you have used.

Semantics - *The meaning of language. The semantics of a word is the meaning of it as given in a dictionary. The semantic meaning of a text is not always straightforward, though, because we can add layers of meaning, for example through euphemisms or dysphemisms and through imagery.*

Key Features may include:

- Denotation - factual and objective meanings
- Connotation - personal and subjective meanings
- Types of meaning - positive / negative, specific / vague, literal / figurative
- Contrasts in meaning - synonym, antonym, hypernym, hyponym, homonym, homophone, homograph
- Changes in meaning - amelioration, pejoration, broadening, narrowing



ACTIVITY

Look up any of these key words that you do not know and add them to your glossary.



Words can have quite literal meanings, which are unproblematic and that we can usually agree upon, but they can also have wider associations.

Take a look at the following texts and see why the words here might be perceived as having more than just one meaning.

- 1) Born in Dudley. Grew up in Iraq.
(Text of an army recruitment advertisement)
- 2) Instinct says: I want to change my life
VSO says: Why stop at your own?
(Text of a Voluntary Service Overseas (VSO) advertisement)

What might 'grew up' mean in this instance – spent his childhood in Iraq? Or might it mean that what he experienced while serving in Iraq forced him to mature.

In 2, think about what it might mean when we say we want to change our lives. Then consider what it means to change the lives of others. What might the advert be suggesting?

Then look at the following texts

- 3) black white rich poor young old
- 4) gun knife shield apple raspberry mango

- What do you notice about the meanings of these words?
- How would you group them?

Words have their own individual meanings which can be easily defined, but at the same time they can draw on our own individual experiences and outlooks.

For example, the words in text 3 may well make particular images spring to mind, but these could be the result of your own experiences or existing stereotypes in society. But it's not just the individual word meanings that matter: it's the relationships between them that are important to text study. We can see contrasts and similarities between words and group words of related meanings into what are called semantic fields. These fields form text patterns and how we recognise and respond to these patterns is at the heart of textual analysis.

What do you notice about the ways in which patterns of meaning are used in the slightly longer text 5?

- 5) Jermaine Beckford used to patrol the roads for the RAC, assisting the stranded, but yesterday, amid tumultuous scenes, he took great pride in engineering a breakdown. Manchester United will recover — they always do — but Beckford's decisive strike left them looking an emotional wreck. Not even the usually reliable home-start service offered by Wayne Rooney could rescue them on the road to Wembley. (Source:<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/sport/football/leagues/premierleague/manutd/6921206/Manchester-United-0-Leeds-United-1-match-report.html>)

You may have noticed that Beckford's performance and the match outcome was described using lexis we would normally associate with cars and Breakdown Recovery Services: *engineering, patrol, wreck, home-start, recover* in order to humorously draw parallels between his previous career and his footballing one.

ACTIVITY 1

Find an article – sports commentary, newspaper report, advert ... that uses lexis in a particular way, write a paragraph identifying the lexical choices that the writer has used and explain the effect you think the writer wanted to achieve.

Euphemisms and Dysphemisms

A **euphemism** is the substitution of a polite expression for one thought to be offensive, harsh, or blunt (e.g. “spending a penny” instead of going to the toilet).

A **dysphemism** is when we use a harsh expression instead of a more neutral one (e.g. animal names when they are applied to people, such as: coot, old bat, pig, chicken, snake, and bitch). We might call someone a pig when we actually mean that their table manners are not very delicate!

ACTIVITY 2

Pick an area where euphemisms are often used (sex, death and bodily functions are the most common). Try to list five euphemisms and five dysphemisms.

ACTIVITY 3

Write a school report in which you, the teacher, wish to communicate a true picture without giving offence. E.g. “Charlotte’s spelling is very creative” rather than she misspells words regularly. Or “Daniel is keen to contribute to class discussions” rather than he shouts out a lot!

Grammar - *The way individual words are structured and arranged together in sentences.*

Key Features may include:

- Word classes: nouns, verbs, adjectives, adverbs, pronouns, conjunctions, prepositions and determiners
- Features of the verb: main and auxiliary, tense, modal auxiliaries, active and passive voice
- Sentence types: declarative, interrogative, imperative, exclamatory
- Sentence complexity: minor, simple, compound, complex, relative length
- Unusual word order
- Standard or non-standard forms
- Other aspects: ellipsis, pre - and post - modification, subject / object, pronoun use, person, agreement, content and function words, noun phrase complexity
- Word structure: prefix, suffix

Some of the key features are explored below.

Word Classes

You need to know the different word classes so that you can analyse how they are used. They are the basic types of words that English has. There are eight of them:

Nouns

A noun is a naming word. It names a person, place, thing, idea, living creature, quality, or action. There are two main types of noun: proper and common. Most nouns are common nouns and they can be divided up into three categories: concrete, abstract and collective.

Adjectives

An adjective is a word that describes a noun. It tells you something about the noun. Examples: *big, yellow, thin, amazing, beautiful, quick, important*

Verbs

A verb is a word which describes an action (doing something) or a state (being something). You will need to find out about main verbs, auxiliary verbs, primary verbs, modal auxiliaries, active and passive verbs. Some information is provided on pages 8-10.

Adverbs

An adverb is a word which usually describes a verb. It tells you how something is done. It may also tell you when or where something happened. Many adverbs end in -ly.

Examples: *slowly, intelligently, well, yesterday, tomorrow, here, everywhere.*

Pronouns A pronoun is used instead of a noun, to avoid repeating the noun.

Examples: *I, you, he, she, it, we, they.*

Prepositions



A preposition usually comes before a noun, pronoun or noun phrase. Prepositions can relate to position. They join the noun to some other part of the sentence.

Examples: *on, in, by, with, under, through, at.*

Conjunctions (connectives)

A conjunction joins two words, phrases or sentences together. Examples: *but, so, and, because, or.*

Determiners

These words come before nouns and refer to them directly. The most common determiner, *the*, is called the definite article. The indefinite article is *a/an*.



ACTIVITY: NOUNS

Sort these nouns into two categories (this is more easily done as a cut and sort activity). Note that the two groups are not necessarily even in number:

Peter	Boy	Cheese	England
Country	Dumbo	The Lion King	Rover
Table	Elephant	Yorkshire	Film
Pencil	Doctor	Fire Engine	Brick

Once you have reached an agreement over what goes where, define the difference between the two groups as clearly as you can.

Next repeat the exercise with these nouns:

Happiness	Armchair	Light Bulb	Hate
Sky	Heart	Tree	Charity
Christianity	Flag	Woman	Time
Wheelbarrow	Loneliness	Jug	Mystery

Modal Auxiliary Verbs

Will Shall May/Might Would Can/Could Must Should Ought to

Modal verbs are used to express ideas such as possibility, intention, obligation and necessity e.g.

- I would have told you, if you had wanted me to.
- Yes, I can do that.

They are not used to talk about things that definitely exist, or events that definitely happened. These meanings are sometimes divided into two groups:

DEGREES OF CERTAINTY - certainty; probability; possibility; impossibility.

OBLIGATION/FREEDOM TO ACT - permission; lack of permission; ability; obligation.

Modal verbs are verbs that 'help' other verbs to express a meaning; it is important to realise that modal verbs have no meaning by themselves. A modal verb such as *would* has several functions: it can be used, for example, to help verbs express ideas about the past, the present and the future.



ACTIVITY: MODAL VERBS

Look through the following advice and identify the modal auxiliary verbs being used. Why has the writer used them?

Treatment for a cold



A cold remedy that could be used is taking **warm liquids**, such as **chicken soup**, **tea** or **warm apple juice**. This might be soothing and could ease congestion by increasing mucus flow. Adding moisture to the air is another remedy that people would recommend. A cool-mist vaporizer or humidifier can add moisture to your home, which might help loosen congestion, and may help you to breathe more easily.

Sentence Construction

Phrases and modification

On one level textual analysis is about making sense of how words are used, but on another level it's about looking to see which words go together and the structures that are formed. Phrases are groups of words that are centred around a head word: a key word class within the phrase that gives the phrase its bigger identity. For example, in a **noun phrase**, the head word is a noun (or sometimes a pronoun, which is often viewed as a type of noun) so the whole phrase takes the identity of this head word.

See if you can identify the head word in each of the noun phrases in texts 1 to 3 (*answers at end of section*)

1. Long, sandy beach
2. The man who loves you
3. My least favourite book

In noun phrases we can see a whole range of other word classes modifying the noun. Often adjectives will be used ('lazy, hopeless idiot') and sometimes the adjectives will be modified themselves by adverbs ('hopelessly lazy idiot'). Determiners, such as 'a' and 'the' will often feature in noun phrases too (a long prison sentence).

Writers will often use adjectives to modify nouns and to provide more descriptive detail or precision to their work, and we can also see that adjectives will often carry with them some of the more obvious opinions of their writers. This makes noun phrases, and the level of modification within a noun phrase, a key area in text analysis.

Other word classes can give their identity to different types of phrase too. We can see **adjective phrases**, **adverb phrases**, **prepositional phrases** and, very importantly to sentence construction, **verb phrases**. The same basic rule is true for all of these, that they gain their form and identity as a phrase from the head word.

See if you can identify the head word in each of the phrases in texts 4 to 6 and from that work out what kind of phrase each one is. (*answers at end of section*)

4. Should have been revising
5. Under the surface
6. Completely inconsiderate

If you are unsure about whether certain words are nouns, verbs or adjectives, go back to the introductory section on word classes.

As a general rule of thumb, the more sophisticated and formal a text is the longer the noun phrases that we might expect to see within it.

Take a look at texts 7 to 9 and see if you notice the difference between the noun phrases used in them.

7. Private payroll growth is a better barometer of animal spirits than total employment, which includes government.

(Source: <http://www.economist.com/blogs/freeexchange/2011/09/americas-jobs-report>)

8. Analysis and validation of support strategies for customer satisfaction parameters is required before maximized systems of strategic environmental processes can progress

(Source: <http://instruct.westvalley.edu/lafave/writsamp0.htm>)

9. We're going on a bear hunt. We're going to catch a big one.

Obviously not all texts will provide you with such clear differences, but they are worth looking out for.

With verb phrases the length is often connected to the amount of detail being conveyed about time, certainty and who is doing what to whom.

Look at texts 10-14 and see if you can identify the differences between what is being described in the verb phrases.

10. You did that work very well.

11. You were doing that work for ages.

12. You could have done that work so much better.

13. You were being worked very hard in your last job.

14. Your bananas may have been picked by farmers on very low wages.

In brief, **the concept of time** is conveyed using two devices: **tense and aspect**. **Tense indicates how far away from the present time an action took place**, while **aspect tells us whether the action or process is (or was) ongoing or completed**. When you think of the difference between 'I cycle to college' and 'I am cycling to college', you should be able to see that one is very much concerned with exactly what is happening at a given moment, while the other is concerned with what generally happens.

Notes on activities - Phrases and Modification – Texts 1, 2 and 3

1. Long, sandy **beach**

2. The **man** who loves you

3. My least favourite **book**

Phrases and Modification – Texts 4, 5 and 6

4. Should have been **revising (verb)**

5. Under the **surface (noun)**
6. Completely **inconsiderate (adjective)**

Phrases and Modification – Texts 7, 8 and 9

7. **Private payroll growth is a better barometer of animal spirits** than **total employment**, which includes **government**. (Source: <http://www.economist.com/blogs/freeexchange/2011/09/americas-jobs-report>)
8. **Analysis and validation of support strategies for customer satisfaction parameters** is required before **maximized systems of strategic environmental processes** can progress (Source: <http://instruct.westvalley.edu/lafave/writsamp0.htm>)
9. **We're going on a bear hunt. We're going to catch a big one.**

Phrases and Modification – Texts 10, 11, 12, 13 and 14

10. You **did** that work very well.
11. You **were doing** that work for ages.
12. You **could have done** that work so much better. past
13. You **were being** worked very hard in your last job.
14. Your bananas **may have been** picked by farmers on very low wages.

Clauses and Sentences

At A Level you're expected **to be able to identify how different sentences are constructed and how they function and communicate meaning**. Whole books have been written about the grammar of clauses and sentences so this is only a very brief outline.

One key point about grammar is that it helps us to convey concepts that words on their own cannot do. If we only used single words we would be able to label a few things, describe some actions and perhaps identify specific people or objects, but grammar allows us to do much more. But like many other areas of language study, grammar also depends on context. Language users make decisions about the structures they employ depending on whether they are writing or speaking, who they are addressing and what they are trying to convey. The section on phrases and modification will have given you some idea of how grammar can be used on a small scale, but with clauses and sentences we are dealing with grammar on a larger scale. Firstly, it's important to establish a connection between words, phrases, clauses and sentences. At the simplest level, clauses tend to consist of phrases which work together. Phrases themselves – as we have seen – consist of groups of individual words centred on a head word.

A **single clause** can form a short sentence (**simple sentence**) but when we link clauses together we create different types of sentence.

Look at texts 1-3 to see **simple sentences**.

1. We drove all night.
2. I sang that song really badly at her wedding party.
3. She gave her own summing up of his character in an article.

Sentences consisting of **two or more main clauses linked by 'or', 'but' or 'and'** have **traditionally been called compound sentences**.

Take a look at texts 4-6.

4. I like to paint and it's one of my few remaining pleasures.
5. Gabrielle Frimpong used to be a school dinner lady but now has a successful writing career.
6. You either study pure dance or you study dance therapy.

In these sentences, the two clauses do not depend on each other, but could exist as sentences in their own right.

Try to test this by removing the conjunction from each example.

Sentences **consisting of two or more clauses, where one is dependent on a main clause, have traditionally been called complex sentences**.

Look at texts 7-10. When you look at the different clauses in these examples, only one in each can actually make sense on its own.

7. He hadn't ever considered doing Linguistics until he saw Deborah Cameron speak.
8. If you donate just ten pounds, we can start to save hundreds of lives.
9. Because he knew what prison was like, he was unwilling to go back inside.
10. These powers could be decisive if there were ever a hung Parliament.

As well as these types of sentence, you will often see **sentences which aren't really sentences**. These are called **minor sentences** and are often abbreviated versions of longer sentences which have been punctuated in the same way as a genuine sentence.

See if you can work out what would have been included to make texts 11-13 full grammatical sentences.

11. Doctor: How are you feeling? Patient: Not too good.
12. (Child to parent): When Granny come?
13. (In a text message): Yeah cool. See you there in a bit.

Different models of grammar offer their own takes on clauses and sentences, and in more recent years, linguists have avoided talking about simple, compound and complex, but instead focused on the relationships between the clauses and how this relates to meaning.

At A Level you will get some credit for being able to label sentences and clauses, but you will **get more marks if you are able to talk about how they create meaning or how patterns are created and what effects they have.**

Take a look at texts 14 and 15 (page 24) and see what you make of the clause and sentence patterns used.

14. If you donate just ten pounds, we can start to save hundreds of lives. If you give just one day a month, we can work together to improve conditions for a whole village. If you spread the word, we can reach more and more potential volunteers. You can make a world of difference.

15. Be bold. Be brave. Be beautiful.

Along with how clauses work together, we also need to consider clause types (or **sentence functions**, as they are sometimes called.

There are **three common types of clause – declarative, imperative and interrogative** – and they are used in different ways.

Declarative clauses are **statements** which **convey information**. They start with the subject of the clause (a noun phrase). See texts 16 and 17.

16. You are going to take your exams this Summer.

17. You should have listened to him.

Imperative clauses are commands which are **directed towards another person**. They start with a verb phrase. See texts 18 and 19.

18. Stop messing around.

19. Step away from the vehicle.

Interrogative clauses are **questions** which can be either open or closed. **Closed questions require just a yes or no answer**, while **open ones need more detail**. Closed questions use a special word order where the subject and a verb are inverted (see the difference between texts 16 and 20)

16. You are going to take your exams this Summer.

20. Are you going to take your exams this Summer?

and **open questions** do the same but **start with a wh- phrase**. See texts 21 and 22.

21. When are you taking your exams?
22. Why are you staring at me?

A fourth type of clause is much less common. **Exclamative clauses start with a wh- phrase and end with an exclamation mark.** Generally speaking, they would also need to feature a verb (e.g. 'What a nice coat that is!') to be classed as a clause, but linguists differ in their opinions on this. What a pity! See texts 23 and 24 (page 24).

23. What big teeth you have!
24. How true that is!

ACTIVITY 1

Find some different types of text – e.g. newspaper reports, adverts, texts etc. Identify the sentence types in each one. Make a record of what you notice about the text type and the sentence types and why you think the writer may have chosen those types/the effects that they have.

ACTIVITY 2

Using one of the texts that you have found, rewrite one of the paragraphs, altering the sentence structures. E.g. join simple sentences to make compound sentences; restructure complex sentences; turn some sentences into interrogatives or exclamatives.



ACTIVITY 3

Write a paragraph or two commenting on the effect of the changes that you have made. E.g. the use of longer compound sentences slows the pace of the writing. The interrogatives directly engage the reader, inviting them to think about the topic, or give it a more informal, chatty style.

Phonetics / Phonology

Phonetics is the study of the sounds made by speakers.

Phonology is the use of vocal elements to add extra force to what is being said.

Phonetics:

Part of the study of spoken texts is to record and transcribe conversations yourself, as well as analysing those done by others. This is a skill that you will gradually develop; you will find useful information on Wikipedia, among other sites, and details about the phonetic symbols. You will need to know that a **phoneme** is the smallest unit of sound in a language and that each phoneme has its own phonetic symbol. The symbols represent the sounds of Received Pronunciation.

Phonology:

Key Features may include:

- Characteristics of normal spoken delivery, e.g. volume, stress, pitch, intonation, (pitch pattern or melody), tempo, silent pauses, voiced pauses (fillers, e.g. 'er', 'erm'), alliteration, assonance. These are called **prosodic** features.
- Elision (partial loss of sounds from words in connected speech, indicated through spelling), e.g. I'm, can't, 'cos, fish 'n' chips, livin', cuppa tea).
- Phonology can even be a characteristic of written English as well as spoken and can be spotted in certain patterns. You will be used to this with the poems that you studied for GCSE, but remember that we are not just thinking about poems anymore. The patterns can include: rhyme, alliteration, onomatopoeia, rhythm, assonance.
- Significant aspects of accent, indicated by means of deviant spelling, e.g. West Lancashire 'th'reet mon' ('the right man'), Somerset 'zo I zaid' ('so I said').

ACTIVITY 1

Find some headlines from a tabloid newspaper which use phonological devices for effect.



ACTIVITY 2

Record a real conversation so that you can look for as many of the characteristics listed above as possible. Write up the conversation and make notes on what you find. (At the end of this booklet is an explanation on how to transcribe conversations.) E.g. How many times do the participants pause? When? Do they use fillers? Why? Do they stutter? Use false starts? What might make them do that? Nervous? Unsure etc?

Pragmatics

The study of the meanings people are really trying to communicate. For example, “How lovely to see you” can convey different meanings: the speaker is genuinely pleased to see the other person; the speaker is being sarcastic and would prefer not to see the other person; there might be an element of malice because of the appalling dress sense of the second person which provides entertainment; etc.

Key Features may include:

- Specific features of turns in speech, e.g. utterance length, speech acts, indirectives, backtracking, repairing, forms (terms) of address, repetition, reformulation, minimal responses, backchannelling, hedging, mitigating devices.
- Recognition of function (force) where different from grammatical form, e.g. use of grammatical declarative to ask question or of interrogative to command.
- Grice’s co-operative principle and four maxims.
- Politeness and face (positive v. negative), face-threatening act.
- Recognition of cultural allusions.
- Identification of implied meanings over and above the semantic or more obvious.
- Explanation and interpretation as to why speaker(s) or writer(s) make their particular choices of language in the specific context.



ACTIVITY 1

This is a big area of study and we will cover this in lots of detail on the course. For now, look up and find out what you can about **Politeness Theory**, and **Grice’s Maxims**. Keep detailed notes and examples.

ACTIVITY 2

List 5 situations where you might not ask somebody something directly. E.g. if you were cold at somebody else’s house that you didn’t know very well, how would you go about asking them to close the window? “*Aren’t you cold?*”

For each situation, write down:

- why you would not ask directly
- what you would say

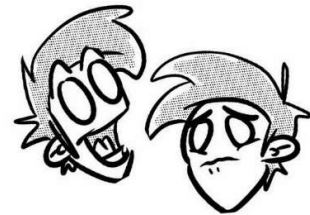
Are there any factors that seem to influence why we are sometimes indirect?

Discourse

- (i) *Longer stretches of text, looking particularly at aspects of cohesion (the way different parts of a text are connected through either grammar or lexis).*
- (ii) *The way texts create identities for particular individuals, groups or institutions e.g. the discourse of law, politics, the media.*

Key Features may include:

- The written genre
- The context of a conversation e.g. an unequal encounter or a peer group chat
- The speakers' roles
- In a written text, the point of view: perspective and voice
- Management by speakers of turn-taking and topics, openings and closings
- Register (topic, level of formality and tone), register switching
- External coherence established through consistent reference to the real world
- Intertextuality
- Use by speakers of frames (scripts or norms of interaction), discourse markers, adjacency pairs, interruptions and overlaps



ACTIVITY

Take a text you have found and annotate it, thinking about the way that the writer has connected their ideas across sentences and paragraphs. For example: have they repeated ideas, used pronouns to refer back to previous content, used discourse markers like firstly, finally etc.? Remember the 'structure' question at GCSE and the way that the writers signalled how ideas followed on from each other.

Plus, annotate your text with any of the other discourse features that you notice from the list outlined above.



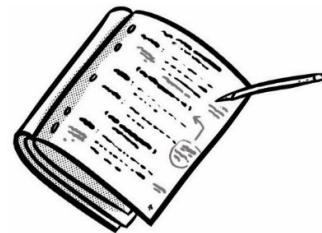
Graphology

The visual appearance of language.

Key Features may include:

- Nature of characters, e.g. handwritten or printed, plain or ornamental, upper or lower case.
- Font type e.g. Arial, Parisian BT, Times New Roman.
- Font style e.g. standard, **emboldened**, *italic*.
- Font size (measured in points – 72 points to the inch, e.g. eight point, ten point, twelve point).
- The concept of the grapheme, the fundamental unit in written language such as letters of the alphabet, numbers, punctuation marks.
- Organisation of text, e.g. headings, columns, bullet points, numeration, borders, boxes, paragraph size, line spacing, use of white space.
- Other aspects, e.g. use of colour, logos, drawings, photographs, captions, diagrams, charts.

A key word to learn: **semiotics**. It is the study of how we read signs.



For some kinds of text, images and symbols are as important in helping to convey meaning as words. Print-based advertising for example relies primarily on attracting and maintaining the interest of its readers often through presenting a striking or unusual visual image.



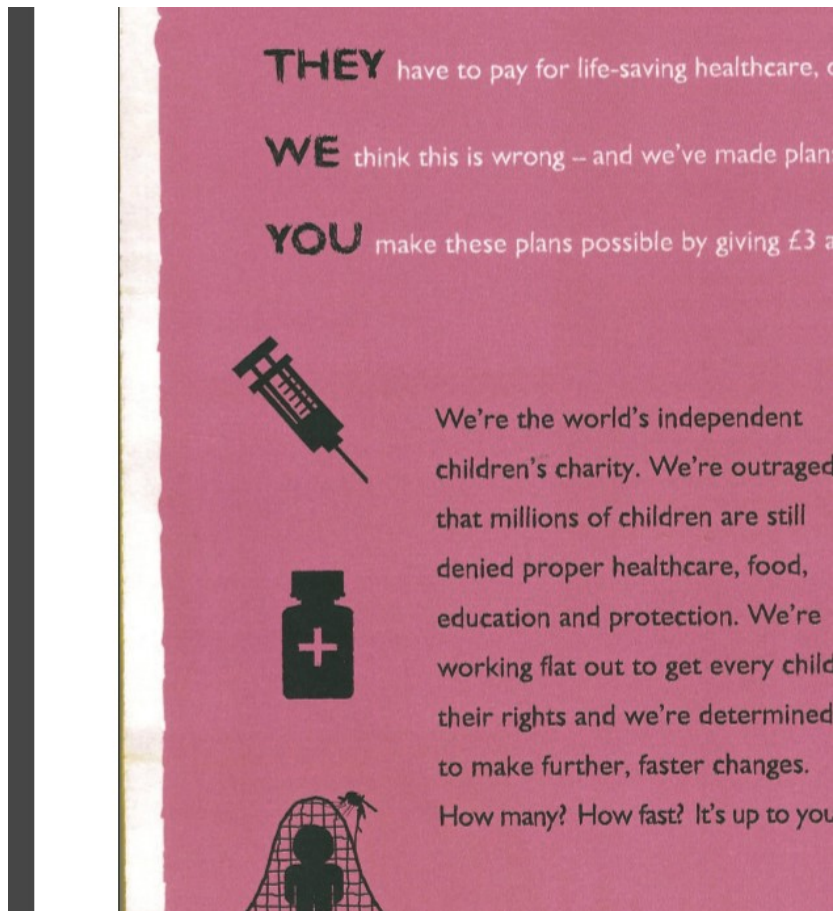
In this text, the image links to the fact that the advertisement is for a radio station; the central image of the radio transmitter dominates the page and the names of the bands representing radio waves allow us to understand the significance of the image in the context of the advertisement. This fixing of meaning is often known as anchoring.

Consequently, many texts will rely on a form of text-image cohesion to ensure that there is a coherent and meaningful relationship between visual and written codes. At a simple level, this might be something like in the following business card where the relationship between the codes is straightforward.



At a more complex level, this might involve challenging and encouraging the reader to make less obvious connections between image and text.

Have a look at the image below and think about the ways in which visual and verbal code relate and combine to present a sense of meaning.



Analysing graphology in a text also involves considering aspects of orthography. For example handwritten texts often aim to replicate a degree of intimacy between text producer and receiver whilst word processing can make use of a range of font types, sizes and effects.

Another common orthographical feature is the use of punctuation marks and emojis in e-discourse such as text messaging, Facebook and Twitter to replace paralinguistic features such as stress, intonation and volume and often for economy reasons to represent ideas and emotions that otherwise would take up unwanted or unavailable space. To explore this, collect a small sample of your own texts and Facebook or Twitter posts and analyse your use of punctuation marks and emojis. What do you notice?

Text producers often make use of established and shared knowledge when using graphological features. One of the most obvious ways that they do this is through the use of colours such as grey, black, white, yellow and red which have all acquired relatively fixed symbolic meaning. On a grander scale, some texts 'borrow' the conventions, layout features and graphological features of other well-known genres – a process of referencing called intertextuality – so that the reader establishes a connection between the two texts or re-evaluates one of the texts in a striking way.

Look at the image below.

While you've been away

Time **8.25** Today's date **05/01/2009**

Name **The Occupier**

Address **[REDACTED]**

Postcode **[REDACTED]**

We've put together an exciting new package.

☒ Phone – save **£92.98** on your new line connection,¹ compared with our standard new line connection fee of £122.33 (subject to survey) plus pay just £10.27 a month** line rental²

☒ Broadband – download speeds of up to 8Mb³ (dependent on line and location).

☒ Digital TV – with BT Vision⁴

Things have changed since you left BT. You could now get a new BT line for a one-off connection fee of £29.35 (if applicable) plus line rental and unlimited inclusive UK* Weekend calls for only £10.27 a month.** We also offer great-value phone and broadband packages, and you can get your digital TV from us too.

BT Vision gives you Freeview channels and loads of on-demand entertainment.

That's thousands of hours of entertainment, from hot new films and soaps to dramas, music videos and kids' viewing. All with no compulsory TV subscriptions so you're totally in control. Best of all, sign up to BT Total Broadband and get BT Vision, broadband, plus your line rental all starting from **just £18.05⁵ a month for the first three months** (equipment and set-up costs apply).

To get your BT phone, broadband and digital TV for under £19 a month for the first three months, call us today.

Call us on 0800 085 5264

- In what ways does the text producer use the conventions and layout of another text?
- What is the impact of this borrowing?



ACTIVITY 1

Find a leaflet, poster or blog and analyse its graphological features. Or collect a small sample of your own texts and Facebook or Twitter posts and analyse your use of punctuation marks and emojis. What do you notice?

Related Concepts

Add the following to your Glossary:

Register

How language varies in relation to situation (audience, purpose and context). Register can be a spectrum of formality through to informality: the style or tone reflects the attitude adopted by the writer/speaker to the reader/audience and the topic. This is called the **tenor**.

The language used in connection with a specific topic is called the **field**. A text from a computer magazine, for example, will include field specific words to do with computing.

Mode

The two main types are spoken and written, with the computer-mediated communication (CMC) also now taking its own important place. Language varies from mode to mode, for example a letter, a phone call and an email will not use the same language even if they have the same audience, purpose and context. Within each mode, there are variations and for the same reasons, e.g. a letter to a friend has different language compared to a letter applying for a job.

Multimodality

Using more than one mode within a text.

Idiolect

The language used by an individual. Everyone expresses themselves in their own style, depending on the influences that have been brought to bear, such as family, travel, education, region, peer group etc.

Sociolect

The language associated with a particular social group, produced due to the effects of education, occupation, social class, religion etc.

Dialect

This has its own distinctive vocabulary, grammar and pronunciation. It is a sub-division of the main language and can exist with several other dialects within the one language; they are mutually intelligible. Usually regional dialects are the most common; in England, you can find the Norfolk dialect, the Liverpudlian and the Geordie dialects, for example.

Accent is not as broad as dialect as it relates only to pronunciation.

Representation

How language represents reality, such as thought, social values and so on.

2. Projects

For each of the projects, you will need to follow the links/read the articles referred to – all of which will be available on Google Classrooms – and complete the tasks. I would advise starting on number 1 first as, once you have done the initial reading, it is a task that you can continue in the background while you complete the others.

While each project has its own reading list/links to useful sites ... don't just stop there. Do your own research... find out as much as you can... see how much you can learn about this fascinating subject!

Project 1: What does it mean to be a linguist?

Read the following English and Media Centre articles: See separate resource materials in Google Classrooms.

- “*Everyday Linguistics: Noticing, Collecting and Analysing Language*” by Dr Fiona English
- “*A day in my language life.*” by Anna Sarchet
- “*Hey, I’m Talking to You*” by Ryan Davidson (where he demonstrates how newspapers and magazines use language to engage *and interact with their audience*)
- “*Language Patterns in Sports Headlines*” by Ben Farndon
- “*Hello...can you help me?*” by Dan Clayton

These articles outline what it means to study language and some of the approaches that you can take when looking at a piece of text. Over the next few weeks, start to collect examples of text that you find interesting – they can be written, spoken, online, signs, posters, things you heard on the television/internet/something a friend said ... anything at all! Keep them in a scrapbook with notes on each text about where you found them and why you found them interesting/amusing/clever ...

Test yourself – see if you can start applying some of the terminology used in the Section 1

Project 2: Lexical and Semantic Change

- Read the following articles: See separate resource materials in Google Classrooms.
"Take Five: Words in the World" by Margaret Coupe
"Brave New Wor(l)d – How and Why the Lexicon is Changing" by Kerry Maxwell
- Look at the following online articles and websites:
<https://www.bl.uk/british-accent-and-dialects/articles/lexical-change-in-the-english-language>
<https://englishlangsfx.blogspot.com/2013/11/selfie.html>
<https://revisionworld.com/a2-level-level-revision/english-language/language-change-0/language-change-0>
- **See table at end of booklet on Lexical Change Processes**
- Answer the following questions in as much detail as you can:
 What is the difference between lexical and semantic change?
 What are some of the semantic changes that words can undergo?
 What are some of the ways that new words come into the language?
- Create a table for each semantic and lexical change where you record as many examples of each as you can find. Use the examples from the articles to get you started, and then look about – use the internet, talk to your family and friends – keep a record of new words and words that have changed meaning over time. It may be that you use words differently to your parents/grandparents. Record everything that you discover in your tables – see below for examples:

Semantic change

Word	Old meaning	New meaning	Process of change
sick	To be unwell/to throw up	To be good/cool	amelioration

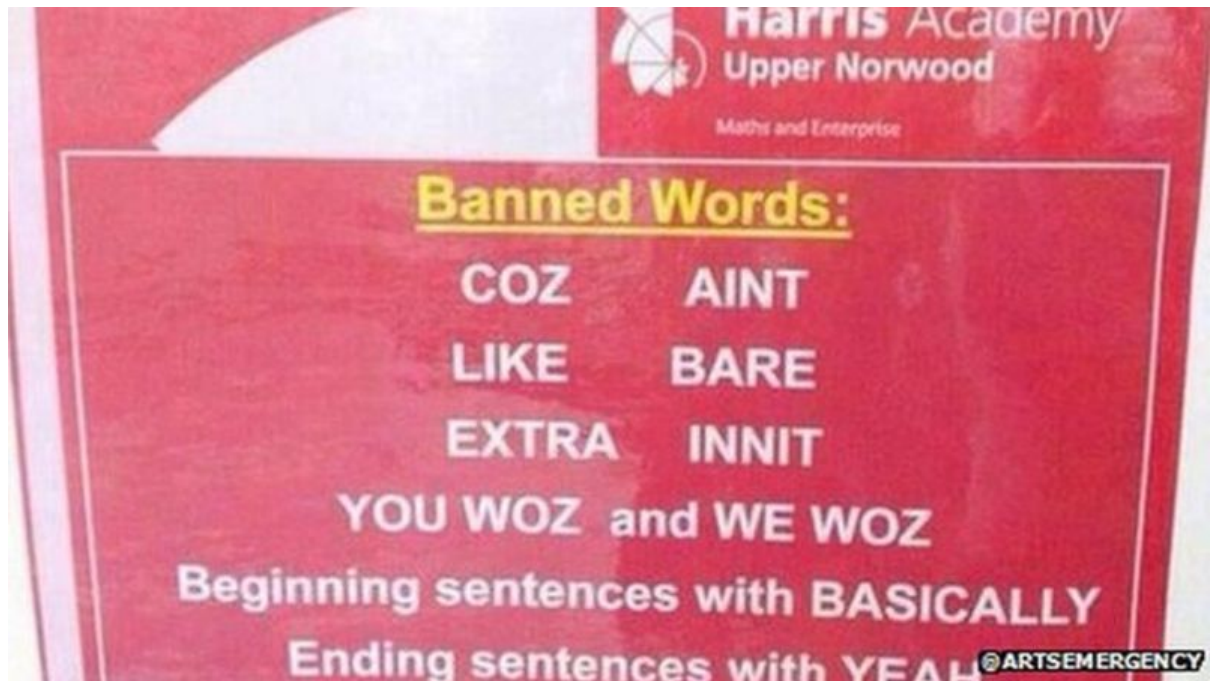
Lexical change

Word	Meaning	Process	First used/reason
Selfie	A photograph that one has taken of oneself, typically one taken with a smartphone or webcam and shared via social media.	Affixation – word self + suffix ~ie	Early 21 st century – introduction of smart phones and social media sites where people could post pictures of themselves – no name existed because this wasn't something that people used to do/the technology did not exist

As you complete these tables, start to think about why new words come into the language and why words might change meaning. Can you spot any patterns or common influences?

Project 3: Attitudes to Language

1) Look at the following image, then make some notes in response to the questions below.



- What do you think and feel about this poster?
- Do you think that anyone has the right to tell you how to use language?
- Was the school right to publish such a sign? What might some of the arguments for and against doing this be?
- How does the context affect the way that you use language?
- What might have been an alternative approach to talking about/regulating language use in schools?

2) Now read the report on Newsround via the following link

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/newsround/24534663>

What comment would you add to the 'your comments' section on this story?

3) Read the following article on the BBC site from 2009

<http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/magazine/8388545.stm>

What points are made about the use of slang?

e.g.

Benjamin Zephania - poet - we need to learn when it is and it isn't appropriate to use slang

Tony Thorne – Language Expert – language is about forming social and emotional bonds as well as communicating with one another

4) Read some of the comments made in response to the article.

Which ones do you agree with? Why?

Write a paragraph of your own in response to the article.

5) Watch the following two talks and read the two articles from The Guardian

- What your speaking style says about you.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jAGgKE82034>

- [https://www.ted.com/talks/john mcwhorter txtng is killing language ik/transcript?referrer=playlist-how language changes over time](https://www.ted.com/talks/john_mcwhorter_txtng_is_killing_language_ik/transcript?referrer=playlist-how_language_changes_over_time)

- <https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2017/nov/15/so-whats-the-problem-with-so-bbc-radio-4-john-humphrys#maincontent>

- <https://www.theguardian.com/technology/booksblog/2017/dec/07/internet-online-news-social-media-changes-language>

6) Speak to people in your family, your friends, anyone that you are in contact with. Get their response to the statement:

“The way young people speak is killing our language”

Keep a record of their responses.

Make a list of words and phrases that young people use that older generations don't use

7) Write an article for a teenage magazine about the way young people speak today.

You can be either celebrate or challenge the way that teenagers use language, but you must pick a side!

Create your own attention grabbing headline.

Write it in a lively and engaging manner.

Use lots of the ideas and opinions that you have read – you may even want to throw in a few technical terms about language change – show off what you have learned. Feel free to do some more research around the topic.

Your article must be no more than 2 pages in length.

3. Useful texts and websites to explore

Texts to introduce you to the study of English Language:

- *A Little Book of Language* – David Crystal
- *Listen to my Child* – David Crystal
- *The Adventure of English* – Melvyn Bragg
- *Language: The Basics* - R. L. Trask
- *The English Language* – David Crystal
- *Mother Tongue* – Bill Bryson
- *Language Myths* – Laurie Bauer and Peter Trudgill
- *Describing Language* – David Graddol, Jenny Cheshire and Joan Swan

Useful websites:

- **www.universalteacher.org.uk**
Andrew Moore's teaching resource site – go to the A Level English Language page.
Useful for definitions of terms and explanations of concepts and theories
- **<https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b006qtnz/episodes/downloads>**
Word of Mouth podcasts – a fascinating and varied Series exploring the world of words and the ways in which we use them. Have a trawl through the episodes and see which ones take your fancy. I really enjoyed the one on Forensic Linguistics!
- **<https://www.theguardian.com/global/series/buzzwords>**
How does language shape the world around us, and vice versa?
Buzzwords explores politics, speech and meaning, with plenty of linguistic nuggets thrown in for good measure.
- **<http://englishlangsfx.blogspot.co.uk/>**
EngLangBlog is a blog written for English Language students and teachers. The posts give suggestions for wider reading and direct you to online resources and articles about controversial language issues in the media.
- **<http://www.bl.uk/>**
The British Library website – head to the 'Discover' page of their website for information on English Language topics such as accents and dialects and a range of other fantastic resources
- **www.englishbiz.co.uk/grammar**
If your knowledge of grammar isn't up to scratch, improve it by using this site
- **<http://david-crystal.blogspot.co.uk/>**
A blog written by 'The Expert' in Language and Linguistics, David Crystal.

Transcribing Speech Guidelines

Recording and transcribing spontaneous speech is a lengthy and challenging process. It is, therefore, important that you are not over-ambitious in the amount of data you choose to collect. It may seem reasonable, for example, to state that you are going to transcribe a 30-minute conversation. However, this will result in many, many pages of data. Not only will this be extremely time-consuming, but you are unlikely to need this much data to produce a detailed and appropriate level of analysis.

You also should appreciate that you will probably need to listen repeatedly to the same short section of speech to ensure you get it right. If your data includes a number of people talking, it can be difficult to hear everything the first time and identify the exact time of any overlaps.

A final tip when transcribing speech is to only include what is relevant to your investigation. If you will not be addressing accent, for example, there is no need to use the IPA to signify aspects of phonology.

However, transcribing accurately is time well spent. The end result can elicit excellent data. Furthermore, for your investigation and the subsequent findings to be valid, your data must be accurate so time given to getting it right is vital.

Transcribing speech

Once you have recorded your spoken data, there are some basic rules to follow when transcribing.

- You are likely to have seen how a script is set out with the character identified on the left-hand side; use this same convention in spontaneous speech.

Transcribing Speech Guidelines – cont'd.

A/AS Level English Language for AQA

If the length of an individual's utterance continues for more than one line, you only need to include the name on the first line:

Aiden: hold it like this (.) good (.) next we're going to do some grating (1) right we need to work in pairs so Emily you come and work with me

Emily: mine use mine (.) do I put it in there

- Transcripts do not include punctuation; for example, there is no need to include a question mark to signify an interrogative:

James: I always wanted one of those when I was younger

Ellie: did you never get one then

James: no (.) no matter how many times I asked for one (.) shocking isn't it

- Unlike the start of a sentence in writing, each new utterance does not need to start with a capital letter:

Shane: what's going off people

Chris: I haven't been on cod in ages (1) it feels like a lost world

Liam: it's really hard

Chris: no I'm just really bad at it

- You may decide to include line numbers; this can make subsequent references to the data easy for a reader to locate. A standard convention is to number every five lines:

Stall holder: you havin' a go boys (.) see what you can win (.) can I show you this before you go (.) come on lads have a go (.) no money we don't charge owt to listen (.) before you go (.) hold on lads 1
5

Andy: I might as well (.) how much is it like

Stall holder: it's it's dead easy (.) a right easy game mate (.) it's 50p mate you get three shots

- If you wish to show **prosody** (such as someone speaking loudly or shouting) you should place the emphasised words in bold:

Adam: how bad was that Steve

Steve: **four** nil (3) mind you that third goal was **way** offside

Adam: just a bit (.) still (.) it's excuses (.) we really got t' defend our set pieces **so much** better

- There may be times when you wish to show elongation (when you make a word sound longer). To do this you should use a colon; a recognised convention is to use two colons:

Mother: shall we go to the park

Laila: ye::s

- Whatever you transcribe, there will always be a need to show pauses. Very short pauses (often referred to as **micropauses**) are signified with (.); if the pause is measurable then the number of seconds should be placed in parenthesis (3):

Andy: can you put it anywhere

Stall holder: anywhere in that D mate (.) chalk the cue first (5) ok that's it

- In any spontaneous conversation, it is highly unlikely that there will be **smooth speaker switch** throughout. Overlaps are regular occurrences. To signify this in your transcript, you should use square brackets to indicate the start and end points of simultaneous speech:

Jake: I'm with Josh on this one (.) if you had to pick one band from the last few years it would have [to be them]
Lucy: [well I like] them

Jonathan: some of their stuff is okay (.) I just don't really get the hype (.) think there's better bands out there

Jake: [like who] and don't go back to the Monkeys

Project 2 - Lexical Change Processes

Process	Definition	Example
Coinage/ neologism	The deliberate creation of a new word. This is not a common process of word formation.	widget hobbit spoof
Borrowing/ loan words	Borrowing of words/concepts from other languages. Words are either anglicised (so that we no longer recognise them as loan words) or they may retain their original spelling or phonology.	bungalow (from Hindi) landscape (from Dutch) futon (from Japanese) saga (Icelandic)
Compounding	Words are combined together to form new words. These can be open, hyphenated or solid.	user-friendly long winded handheld
Clipping	Words are shortened and the shortened form becomes the norm (use a good dictionary to see the original unclipped form of these words).	pram bus phone gym deli flu
Blending	A combination of clipping and compounding: words are abbreviated and joined together to form a new word.	moped (motor + pedal) newscast (news + broadcast)
Acronym	First letters are taken from a series of words to create a new term.	NATO AIDS
Initialism	The first letters from a series of words form a new term, but each letter is pronounced.	CD MP3 OMG
Affixation	One or more free morphemes are combined with one or more bound morphemes.	disinterest marketeer regift
Conversion or functional shift	A word shifts from one word class to another, usually from a noun to a verb.	text google network
Eponym	Names of a person or company are used to define particular objects. Often they are the inventors or distributors of the object.	pasteurise galvanise boycott silhouette
Back formation	A verb is created from an existing noun by removing a suffix.	liaise - from liaison surveil - from surveillance locate - from location insert - from insertion