

A LEVEL ENGLISH LANGUAGE

Making use of the QMUL resources

EXISTING MATERIAL

- The Linguistics Research Digest has been a hugely valuable resource for teachers and students, refreshing research and adding to the range of case studies we can draw on.
- The work on MLE, address terms, compliments and social media use all provide manageable and accessible reads for students for either their NEA or exam components.
- For example, investigations into everyday spoken language encounters – [asking to go to the bathroom](#), [the functions of 'I don't know'](#), or [saying 'no problem'](#) – all provide recognisable events for students to explore further, encouraging them to focus linguistically on everyday uses of language they might have ignored.

EXISTING MATERIAL

- The pages on Spoken English features, including the audio files, transcripts and teacher notes are fantastic for introducing the teaching of spoken English for all English Language A levels (especially 7702/1 for AQA).
- Zack's bike incident has been a staple of my lessons for a while now and I put it together with an extract of a Conan Doyle, Sherlock Holmes story for a 7702/1 paper for students to work on (two texts telling stories, one from an older time and in a literary form, one contemporary and spoken).
- Many of the transcripts can be used for different parts of 7702/1, including [Howard and Junior's dog story](#) and [Madeleine](#) for child language development, [Lorna and Rachel & Lucas and Hannah](#) for interaction in speech.

EXISTING MATERIAL

- The [language investigation pages](#) offer some great material for the NEA and might even give you a few starting ideas to set up NEA investigations with students.
- Many of them link to other areas such as interaction, gender and change, and can illustrate how students can start to ask questions about language use based on what they have been learning for other parts of the course.

NEW MATERIAL

- The latest material opens up an even bigger range for students and teachers to draw on.
- All these areas link directly to parts of all the English Language A levels.
- We'll look at a couple here in more detail and see how they might link to the AQA A level.

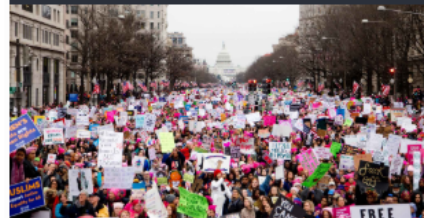
Spoken London English



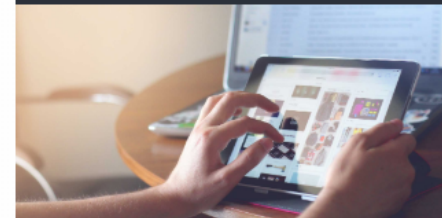
Language and gender



Discourses and attitudes



Language and the media



Language change



Language diversity



LANGUAGE DIVERSITY & CHANGE

- Paper 2 of the AQA A level has two main areas: language change and language diversity (with quite a large degree of crossover/overlap between those).
- What sort of crossover/overlap do we mean?
- These two sections of the QMUL English Language Resources offer some really useful material for both areas.
- The focus on code-switching links to one of the key areas at the top of the AO2 mark scheme – **performance of identity** – and an understanding of how people use language in different contexts to perform different aspects of their identity.

LANGUAGE DIVERSITY & CHANGE

- The [Accent and Social Class unit](#) offers useful examples of phonological change over time, linking change to diversity and to wider social contexts.
- A helpful part of this is the focus in the [discussion points](#) on how to analyse sounds and link them to meanings (something also seen in the top folder of the AQA NEA standardisation investigations this year).

LANGUAGE DISCOURSES

- The other part of AQA Paper 2 is Language Discourses.
- What do we mean by ‘language discourses’?
- **“..ways of thinking about, talking about, arguing about and describing how we feel about language.”**
- One way of thinking about is that linguists describe the features and functions of language, chart its use and users, while non-linguists tend to fall back on other ways of describing language – metaphor, cliché, broader tropes from other fields.
- (Although Lane Greene’s new book ‘Talk on the Wild Side’ slightly complicates this picture!)

LANGUAGE DISCOURSES

- The activities in [Discourses and Attitudes](#) provide some practical and text-based activities for engaging with how people feel about language and how they express these ideas.
- The [opinion writing about grammar unit](#) is particularly helpful for Q4 of Paper 2 and the [teaching notes](#) have some excellent ideas for possible topic areas and texts (plus further reading).

PUTTING IT INTO PRACTICE

- Always concern with English Language A level about its sheer scope – there's lots to cover.
- So, worth remembering that on Paper 2 there are some bigger, overarching questions that we want students to be able to answer.
- How and why does language change?
- How and why does language vary?
- What do people think about this change and variation?

PUTTING IT INTO PRACTICE

- Teachers can make use of – and students can draw on – a whole range of different research, theory and ideas for Paper 2.
- There is no definitive list of studies.
- It's **what they do with their knowledge** and **how they relate that knowledge to the questions** in the exam that's important.
- What the levels mean and how this might be understood.
- All the material in the QMUL English Language Resources can feed into this range of AO2 to draw on.

QUESTIONS & DISCUSSION