



Student responses with examiner commentary

AS English Language 7701

Paper 2: Language Varieties 7701/2

For teaching from September 2015

For assessment from June 2016

Introduction

This resource gives examples of marked student responses to questions from our AS English Language specimen materials, with accompanying examiner commentaries illustrating why responses have been placed within particular levels of the mark scheme.

The responses in this resource all relate to Paper 2: Language Varieties. Please see the separate resources for examples of marked student responses from Paper 1.

Paper 2: Language Varieties (7701/2)

As detailed in the specification (3.2), the aim of the area of study examined in this paper is to allow students to explore language variety. Students will study the key concepts of audience, purpose, genre and mode and will explore language in its wider social and geographical contexts. Students will study varieties of English within the British Isles. This part of the subject content also requires students to study social attitudes to, and debates about, language diversity. The question paper examines students' knowledge across these areas.

In Section A (Language diversity), students answer one question from a choice of two on language diversity.

In Section B (Language discourses), students complete a directed writing task on attitudes to language.

Question 1:

Discuss the idea that a person's language might be affected by their occupation.

In your answer you should discuss concepts and issues from language study. You should use your own supporting examples and the data in Text A, below.

Assessment objectives covered:

AO1 (10 marks)

AO2 (20 marks)

Total marks available: 30

Student response

The interaction in text A is between staff in a restaurant kitchen, so it is a high-pressure situation due to the high expectations of customers and the pace of the work involved.

Comment [A1]: Context is considered

In the extract Jack uses the imperative utterance “Al get us a bottle of Chablis”. The use of the aggravated directive “get” to give an order shows that Jack is in a position of power. Given that the participants are working in a restaurant, it is likely that Jack is a head chef or a manager. As they are working in a professional kitchen, the high pressure of the situation could be a cause of Jack having to use more direct language in order to complete tasks efficiently.

Comment [A2]: Good linking of AO1 language identification to AO2 power and status ideas (Level 3)

Comment [A3]: Roles and context are considered

Within this imperative utterance, Jack uses the proper noun “Chablis”. This is an example of specialist, occupational lexis, as an understanding of this word might be restricted to people in the catering industry. This shows that the participants are all members of the same discourse community, because John Swales (2011) states that members of the same discourse community use lexis specific to that occupation. Furthermore, Jack omits the concrete noun “table” from “check on one no starters”, which shows that there is a shared understanding that tables are simply referred to as numbers. It is also an efficient method of communication, which is important given the high pressure of the situation. This shows that all of the participants share an element of power, because they are able to understand this implied meaning. This reflects the work of Drew and Heritage (1993), who state that members of a discourse community all share certain inferences.

Comment [A4]: Context linked to specifics of language again

Comment [A5]: Another good AO1 point linked to AO2 occupational concepts

Comment [A6]: A wider AO2 point is made, linked to specific theory (Swales)

Comment [A7]: A good point about grammatical structure and the significance of the context to the style of communication (Level 3 with some Level 4 perceptiveness)

Evidence of how occupation can affect lexical choices is shown through the participants’ frequent use of specific nouns such as “risotto”, “chicken”, “Chablis” and “dishes”. As the participants are working in a restaurant, their job roles are very physical- they involve carrying plates and chopping food, for example. This links to the work of John Swales (2011), who states that members of a discourse community have common goals- in this case, the participants have a common goal to ensure that proceedings in the kitchen run smoothly, so they use a number of concrete nouns to clearly indicate what they need.

Comment [A8]: This is relevant but a little undeveloped

Comment [A9]: Lexical features from the transcript are discussed (Level 3)

There is an element of playfulness in the interaction when Al responds to one of Jack’s orders with the imperative utterance “don’t you chuffin’ start mate”. The use of slightly taboo language “chuffin’” and the informal address “mate” shows Al challenging the authority of Jack. This suggests that there is a good enough relationship between the two of them for Al to do this. This supports the work of Koester (2004), who believes that interpersonal relationships at work are important in order to complete tasks.

Comment [A10]: A little repetitive and doesn’t develop earlier points

Comment [A11]: Hints of Level 5 AO2 with the recognition of playfulness and rule-breaking in the interaction

There is also playfulness when Ed uses the interrogative “are you gonna wash any dishes tonight”, directed at Al. This could be seen as light teasing as it implies that Al does not often do the washing up. However, Ed could mean that Al is wasting time and he could be trying to focus his attention onto what he should be doing in order to make sure that the washing up gets done.

Comment [A12]: Again, this is a relevant reference to theory but it is not developed or fully explained

Comment [A13]: Relevant focus on the pragmatics of the interaction

The structure of the interaction alternates between an order from Jack and a response from Al and Ed. This again shows how Jack is in an authoritative occupation because he is leading the interaction. After the playful conflict in the middle of the interaction, Jack then tries to revert to this structure by using the discourse marker “right”. Here, he is trying to focus the participants’ attention back onto their work in order to make sure they fulfil their roles and he fulfils his own role of managing and leading other employees.

Comment [A14]: Some detailed focus on the structure of the interaction and the power and status of the participants (Level 4)

Overall, this interaction shows that language is affected by occupation in a number of ways. It shows that a role which involves power or authority allows the individual to use more direct language, such as imperatives. It is also evidence of how a certain type of job can affect lexical choices- in this case, working in a restaurant results in the frequent use of specific nouns.

Comment [A15]: This is a useful point as an overview at the end

Examiner commentary

This is an extremely focused but rather narrow response. While there is sustained linguistic focus on the data across a number of language levels and some wider comment on AO2 concepts, there is no wider discussion of occupational language from other fields of work and this is an area that could be developed with students in planning answers to essay questions such as this.

AO2

There is some reasonable discussion of the interaction structure in Text A, good focus on some grammatical structures and some insightful comments on the playfulness and rule-breaking shown in some of the interaction. The narrow focus on the data and lack of reference to other occupations is an issue with several of the bullet points in each band.

There is enough here to suggest that the student is working in Level 5 for some descriptors (playfulness, rule-breaking and issues of power in occupational language) but the lack of discussion beyond the data and its immediate context would suggest that a compromise mark at the top of Level 4 is fairest.

AO1

The structure is good and the expression very clear. The focus on the data is sustained and an appropriate linguistic register is used, with some accurate labelling of word classes and grammatical structures. This would probably secure a good Level 4 mark.

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some good, detailed focus on the data and a range of language features discussed and exemplified. • Some good understanding of links between context and occupation. • Good linking of language details to wider concepts. • Some knowledge of relevant theorists and models. • Appropriate linguistic register in both essay style and terminology applied to the data analysis. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not enough range to the answer: more occupations and a wider sense of overview to the topic would have helped. • Could have further explained and developed the references to theories. • A clearer overview could have been offered, working outwards from features in the data to wider discussion of different types of language in different occupations.

Question 2:

Discuss the idea that women and men use language differently.

In your answer you should discuss concepts and issues from language study. You should use your own supporting examples and the data in Table 1, below.

Assessment objectives covered:

AO1 (10 marks)

AO2 (20 marks)

Total marks available: 30

Student response

The question proposed is one that has been pondered by many for many years. Of course men and women have some physical differences, but more deep rooted differences are difficult to decipher. In an increasingly equal world, many seem to have adopted a “different but equal” approach to resolving issues of perceived inequality. However, do women and men actually use language differently? Do they use different words and use language for different purposes, or are they actually a lot more similar than we think?

Because the topic of whether women and men use language differently is so controversial, it is a hot topic for linguists to study and when thought provoking results are released it can inspire other linguists to support or deny previous research. An example of this is the release of a book called “Men are from Mars, Women from Venus” by John Gray. The book suggested that problems in communication between men and women originated from differences between the way men and women use language. The book was a big seller as to some it seemed to create explanation for problems in their relationship.

However, others were not impressed as a difference in using language can be the problem behind many relationships, not just between the different sexes. In a very direct and frank response, linguist Deborah Cameron wrote a book called “The Myth of Mars and Venus” and sought to disprove the claims in John Gray’s book. However she does not disapprove of the idea that differences can exist, rather that they exist because of social factors rather than that of biological differences. Cameron notes that same-sex couples also cite similar communication issues to those in heterosexual relationships, thus undermining one of the key premises of Gray’s argument.

Another linguist that agrees that differences exist but are due to social rather than biological differences is Deborah Tannen. Her work looks at the differences in how women and men use language, mostly in spoken circumstances. For example, Tannen looked at the conversational rituals of men and women and how often they soften criticism or apologise. This difference in language use could be rooted in a woman’s desire not to appear to be a “nag”.

Janet Holmes identified this type of softening when she identified the two types of tag questions that women use, the facilitative and the softening tag question. By saying “pass us the salt, would you?” the softening tag question weakens the tone of a demand. Tannen identified these softening features a lot more in women’s language than in men’s.

Comment [A16]: This is a rather unclear opening. While it suggests that the topic has been studied and understood, it doesn’t offer much precise focus on the question or the data, as yet. There are also some unsupported assertions about gender.

Comment [A17]: This offers a sense of the debate that exists around the topic, but not much specific focus.

Comment [A18]: This is a relevant reference to an example of the difference model, but Gray is not a linguist and MAFMWAFF is a pop-psychology book, rather than an academic text.

Comment [A19]: This is a fair point but one that could be exemplified more clearly here.

Comment [A20]: This needs to be expressed and spelt out more clearly as it isn’t entirely accurate.

Comment [A21]: This is a point that Cameron makes but one that could be developed more fully here.

Comment [A22]: While this is a fair representation of Tannen’s view, by grouping Cameron and Tannen together, the argument is weakened.

Comment [A23]: This is an area that Tannen discusses but there are no specific examples given here to illustrate such a problem.

Comment [A24]: Possibly, but there are many other interpretations.

Comment [A25]: This is a good example to use here but the reference to Holmes could be developed by contextualizing the work she was doing. Level 3 AO2.

Tannen's research is often linked to the Deficit Theory of Robin Lakoff. Lakoff observed women's speech and listed features that she felt were more common to women than to men. These features included: hyper correct grammar, precise colour terms and intensifiers. Lakoff found clear differences, but I disagree with the proposition that these features show any kind of deficiency in women's language. Just because a woman says "This mauve blouse is so nice" doesn't make her any weaker than a man saying "This purple shirt is nice".

Comment [A26]: This is incorrect. Tannen's work is associated with the Difference Model

Comment [A27]: A clear view is given here but there is a lack of development of what the deficit model involved or what might be meant by a 'deficit'.

When looking at the data in Table 1, it is clear to see that there are some differences between the men and women at the meeting in terms of how many and how long their turns are. This would certainly fit with Tannen's ideas about difference between the sexes. However, there are also interesting figures that suggest that it's not as simple as saying that all men get more and longer turns than women. For example, Woman D gets 20.5 average turns per meeting which is more than two of the men. Also, while Woman D is clearly interrupted most in the data, Men F,G and H are interrupted frequently too, suggesting that it might not just be gender that is a factor here.

Comment [A28]: These are interesting examples but need more detailed discussion.

Comment [A29]: The data is discussed here for the first time and linked to the ideas of Tannen.

Comment [A30]: A challenge to Tannen's ideas is introduced here.

The Dominance theory focuses more on men's speech rather than women's and how they are different. The dominance model found that men interrupted and dominated conversations more than women and this is a sign of dominance over women. However looking at the results in the table, the figures may prove otherwise. Given that the men did the most interrupting helps to support the dominance theory, but when we see that the men were also most interrupted on average then it seems as though the men are just interrupting each other rather than interrupting the women and showing dominance over them.

Comment [A31]: The data is used to support a challenge to the heterogeneity of males' and females' language use. Suggests a hint of Level 5 for AO2.

Comment [A32]: A different model is mentioned here but it is not yet a clear explanation of how it works.

Comment [A33]: Not very clear explanation.

One woman in particular was interrupted the most (Woman D); however she was taking the most turns out of all the women. A piece of evidence that shows that the women are being dominated by the men is the number of turns the women have compared the men and how long the men speak compared to the women. On average the men spoke for twice the amount of time that the women did and had overall the most turns. Going back to Tannen in the Difference Model the results in the table are very similar to the hypothesis she devised in her book "Talking From 9 to 5" where she mentions the roles of women speaking in the workplace and how this is different to how men speak in the workplace. Tannen's mentions of social issues such as the glass ceiling and the gender pay gap further explores how men and women's differences in language are due to social factors and not biological.

Comment [A34]: This is another attempt to use the data and it is useful for opening up different interpretations of what is in the table. Starting to hit Level 4 AO2 more fully here as different interpretations are being explored.

Comment [A35]: The focus on the data helps to illuminate different ways of explaining how women and men use language. There is also some appropriate linguistic register (Levels 3 or 4 AO1).

So far I have only looked at linguists who identify differences in male and female speech. However, there are linguists that disagree and believe there is no difference (or limited differences) between the way men and women use language. Janet Hyde whose research is a lot more up to date has the benefit of hindsight to aid her in her analysis. By using meta-analysis Hyde can draw data from lots of experiments and research to conclude this into one study. When Hyde analysed the data she actually found very little difference between men and women when looking at a range of features - talkativeness, vocabulary, interruption and assertive speech. In fact Hyde goes so far to say that the more we look at

Comment [A36]: These wider factors are useful but not fully explained. Some Level 4: effects of situation (workplace) and status.

Comment [A37]: These are useful references to Hyde's gender similarities hypothesis (AO2 Level 5).

male and female language the fewer differences we shall find and that despite factual evidence stereotypes still remain in **society**.

Comment [A38]: This doesn't necessarily add to the points above.

When we look at all these linguists trying to decipher if differences exist between male and female speech we start to understand that it is a lot more complicated than it first seems. Nature and nurture can play a role in how a person uses **language**. It is hard to know whether it is gender or social factors that lead to the way a person uses language. Also, social factors could derive from experiences that all of the gender has seen such as a gender pay gap or that individuals have experienced. Also the nature of the situation the data has been gathered is also important: how many men, how many women in each group? It is true that different results are drawn from mixed and same sex groups and this makes it all the more complicated to understand if differences exist and if so what are they and **why**.

Comment [A39]: Some consideration of different social and biological reasons for

Comment [A40]: These are relevant ideas to introduce but could have been dealt with earlier and in a bit more detail.

Examiner commentary

This is an open-minded and informed response to the question, showing knowledge of some useful language research and a willingness to look at different interpretations, but it has some structural issues and doesn't always address the question (especially the data) in a way that allows detailed and clear discussion.

One initial point to make is that while there are different ways to answer a question like this, the lack of focus on the data in Table 1 until quite late on, doesn't allow the student to root the discussion in textual detail and examples until later. As a result, the early parts of the answer seem a little vague and undeveloped.

AO2

There is some good knowledge of Tannen and Hyde, and some references to other researchers and thinkers, but these are not always clearly explained and there is a tendency towards broad and unsupported assertions at the end of some paragraphs.

When the student begins to focus on the data, the response clearly benefits and starts to move rapidly up the levels of AO2. The willingness to look at different variables and alternative interpretations is a strength of the answer. However, there are gaps and the reader does not get much of a sense of the different ideas and different models used to discuss gender and interaction or the different areas that are debated. These could have been handled with more skill and range.

This would probably secure a Level 4 mark, reflecting the moments of Level 5 discussion and the solid Level 3 base elsewhere.

AO1

The structure is generally sound and the expression fairly clear, but it lacks clarity in places and this prevents some ideas from being fully developed. The lack of focus on the data to begin with means that AO1 is quite limited, but this is addressed later on.

This would probably receive a mark on the borderline of Levels 3 and 4.

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some good knowledge of Difference Model work • Some good knowledge of Janet Hyde's Gender Similarities Hypothesis • Willingness to consider different interpretations of the data in Table 1 • Willingness to look beyond gender and consider other factors • Appropriate linguistic register in both essay style and terminology applied to the data analysis. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Could have dealt with the data earlier in the response • Could have rooted the discussion in specifics earlier on • Some explanations are unclear or undeveloped (perhaps Hyde's statistical points, for example) • Some references are not fully supported • The discussion of other variables could have been more detailed and developed to offer better AO2 Level 5 coverage

Question 3:

Write an opinion article in which you discuss the issues surrounding people changing their accents. Before writing your article you should state your intended audience.

Assessment objectives covered:

AO2 (20 marks)

AO5 (20 marks)

Total marks available: 40

Intended audience: readers of The Guardian's "Comment Is Free" pages

Home to Britain's oldest recorded town, the largest turf maze in the world and the first place a crocodile was ever bought to in the UK: Essex. Despite all the fascinating trivia the region is perhaps better known for its distinct accent. Like any region, Essex harbours its own unique accent which residents can use for a variety of purposes from buying fake tan to selling a second 'and car. But, before I mock the area too much, I should make it clear that I am from this cultural heartland. Despite this, I have always been picked up on for my lack of an "Essex" accent. I have always been half way up the gravel drive to RP but just quite not posh enough to knock on the front door. But, to all my Essex friends I am the "the posh one". I don't pronounce "milk" as "miwk" and I have never really dropped the 'g' sound at the end of a word in "getting" or "knowing". But this shift away from my local accent was not a conscious move on my part. This is why I have a lot of empathy for those accused of being a ponce when they stray from their local accent. I have however come to the informed conclusion that not only am I not consciously changing my accent, but that people have their own reasons for changing their accent and we should not be quick to judge.

Comment [A41]: Opens with a playful and witty style, immediately establishing a strong voice (AO5 Level 4/5)

Comment [A42]: Good use of an example and move towards focus.

Comment [A43]: Offers a personal stance which fits the op-ed form well.

Comment [A44]: Uses simple sentence to good effect.

Comment [A45]: Specifics of phonology of Essex accent are mentioned with a light touch (AO2 Level 3)

Comment [A46]: Offers room for different angles to be shown. Very effective opening paragraph.

Comment [A47]: Perhaps needs to explain why they don't have an Essex accent for their argument.

I had initially hoped to conduct an article on the perils of accent covering and changing. I had read an article on James Middleton, whose girlfriend is reportedly ditching the ‘why aye’ Geordie Cava accent for the Dom Perignon of accents. Of course this champagne accent is Received Pronunciation but it made me really wonder. Do people really still want to talk like that? And if so why? My initial reaction to Donna Air covering her accent had been a disapproving head shake, a quiet tut at those ashamed of their accent. In my head, I could not fathom how one would not want to pronounce “town” as “toon” but it was during this thought that I received a sad but needed reality check. I was all of a sudden in my vivid imagination stood on a podium. I had a crown of withered flowers on my head. The crowds were jeering and when I looked down engraved onto the medal around my neck the words “biggest hypocrite in the world” could be seen. I had just had an epiphany. I’ve been looking down on those scoffing on the RP accent all this time when I’ve been harboring a hint of RP my whole life.

Comment [A48]: This is less effective and makes a rather clunky connection between the source text and this new piece.

Comment [A49]: Puts forward some ideas about attitudes to accents (positive and negative).

Comment [A50]: Nice turn of phrase here and some good focus on personal attitudes to accents and the scope for hypocrisy. Could perhaps be a little clearer in identifying attitudes.

Comment [A51]: This could be drawn out to illustrate the issues at stake more fully.

Comment [A52]: Specific references to linguistic research into attitudes to accents (AO2 Level 4)

Comment [A53]: Again, AO2 is strong here, with a sense of wit and flair coming through in the style.

Comment [A54]: Clear and direct focus on why people might feel pressure to change an accent (AO2 Level 3). Perhaps needs more examples to illustrate the stereotypes attached to Received Pronunciation and regional accents?

Comment [A55]: Accent prejudices are mentioned.

Comment [A56]: The reference to Liverpool is useful but not developed enough.

Comment [A57]: This explanation is still rather unclear to a non-specialist audience and would need further/better clarification.

It’s a pity really that so many stigmas are attached to accents. It’s also a pity that so many people follow so blindly claims backed up by misleading “facts”. The University of Aberdeen announced that the Brummie accent was the funniest. And lucky for them, comedians such as Lenny Henry and Jasper Carrott were on the scene. How this was actually tested however, was in a pretty unreliable way. When conducting an experiment on attitudes to language, linguists favour the matched guise test from Howard Giles, where the only factor they try to change is the accent. However University students swanning round Aberdeen asking people the same joke in a different accent is a pretty inconclusive way of trying to figure out which accents are the funniest. Different people find different things funny; we don’t all sit at home like me and watch videos of dachshunds dressed up like minions.

When so many stereotypes exist around accents, it makes it easier to understand why someone might choose to change their accent when it is attached to so many negative connotations. An accent is part of your identity, it can fly the flag of the region of origin and it is a sad truth that some choose to hide the flag due to the stereotypes that exist just because of the way they speak. However, it has been researched that the Scouse accent is resisting being toned down and inhabitants of Liverpool are hamming up their accent to truly fly the flag of pride of being a Scouser. Perhaps Scouse is gaining its own covert prestige which is identified in Labov’s research where he looks at different types of prestige in accents. Overt being the form accepted and promoted by society, which could be Received Pronunciation, and covert

gaining prestige because it is different. When we want to know what kind of accent is preferred we look to linguists doing current and important research: Ellen Ryan's "status or solidarity" questions ask whether a regional accent is preferred as being warm and welcoming, or if the voice of those who run the country - the public school accent, RP – is more respected. Whichever one is preferred I believe time will show, but it does seem that Received Pronunciation is slowly waving away into the distance on a private yacht, and that the media is now awash with regional accents. We cannot avoid the fact that only 4% of the UK speak with an RP accent and I believe this speaks volumes for how prestigious this accent really still is.

Comment [A58]: While these are important concepts and these aren't necessarily incorrect explanations, they are not outlined very clearly and need to be better integrated.

Comment [A59]: As above, this is a useful reference to make but one that is perhaps underdeveloped for AO2 linguistic content at the expense of added lightness of touch for AO5.

Comment [A60]: This point isn't entirely clear. What speaks volumes? And what are we supposed to hear from this?

The Daily Mail in 2012 conducted a test on attitudes to accents and how friendly, intelligent and trustworthy different regional accents were. By reporting all the usual tropes - that Scousers were untrustworthy/unintelligent and that the Devon and Cardiff accents were the friendliest - the report did everything in its power to further enforce the stigmas of a regional accent. If your Cockney accent was seen as "untrustworthy" you wouldn't want a future employer to think every day you would stumble up the apples and pears absolutely Scotch mist, then you might attempt to duck and dive your regional vernacular. This is where some rely on the capacity of human beings to swap and change the way they speak at their own will. Code switching is a fascinating concept where speakers can swap from accents and dialects to suit the situation or to whom they are speaking. Some people, namely the Daily Mail columnist Lindsay Johns, underestimate the human being's power to code switch, but I cannot be so ignorant to ignore the fact that code switching is a real thing. It just makes sense: people change their accent and dialect to suit who they are conversing with. When the Daily Mail brands your accent as "untrustworthy" with a red hot iron it's no wonder that in a professional environment some might choose to tone down their accent in the board room to avoid feeling like an outsider.

Comment [A61]: Looks at some recent research (AO2 Level 3)

Comment [A62]: Witty and playful style here, showing some good integration of Cockney Rhyming Slang (AO5 Level 5)

Comment [A63]: Looks at code-switching and repertoire here (AO2 Level 5 - but without a great deal of linguistic detail)

Comment [A64]: A partial reference to a text studied in class where Johns denies that young people can code-switch. Not developed enough to make sense on its own here for AO2 credit.

Comment [A65]: Useful references to social stigmas and accents in the workplace (AO2 Level 3)

A sad fact postulated by linguists recently is that our rich culture of accents is being smoothed out. This smoothing out of accents is called "Dialect Levelling" and has been widely reported to be happening across the UK with the Estuary English Accent. Linguist Jane Smith went all the way up to Glasgow to test language features and found that glottal stops were being used amongst the young Glaswegians (a form common to Estuary English). We cannot ignore any longer the effect social media and the media are having on our lives. The twittersphere allows information to travel faster than ever before and the TV generation means we are heavily influenced by the accents we hear everyday on programmes like Educating Yorkshire or Eastenders. The next few

Comment [A66]: A more focused and clear reference to a specific piece of research into accents and why they change (AO Level 4)

Comment [A67]: Reference is made to media influence on accents and attitudes to them (AO2 Level 3)

decades will be an interesting few for the UK's accents. Will a sense of identity and pride emerge among all regions? Or will a common accent and dialect begin to settle?

Comment [A68]: Not a very convincing conclusion. No real attempt made to link back to the opening paragraph.

Examiner commentary:

The student has made a good attempt to address the issues around accent change in a witty and individual manner for her audience. The piece begins very well, with a clear sense of personal voice, lived experience and intelligent understanding of the social issues connected to language use, but falters a little as it goes on. The student has attempted to use her evident knowledge of linguistic research and concepts to support her argument, but these references are not always made explicit enough and sometimes lack cogence for a non-specialist audience.

The pitfalls evident here reflect the challenges facing students in matching an accessible and lively style for AO5 with the range of knowledge needed for high level AO2 marks, and is probably the case that this answer strives for AO5 at the expense of AO2, but ends up falling a little short on both by the end. Another aspect to consider is the need for a clear line of argument: the elements are all here but perhaps not quite sequenced to the best effect.

AO2: reference is made to key language concepts such as overt and covert prestige, social prejudices to accents, the links between class, region and accents, the work of Giles and Ryan, along with the recent ITV Tonight survey by ComRes. Not all of these are explicitly developed, but good knowledge is shown in places. This would probably secure a mark low in Level 4. To achieve marks in Level 5, the student would need to argue and explore different views.

AO5: after a really effective and engaging start, there are continued flashes of style, but the end is rather disappointing and vague. An attempt has been made to use personal experience as a vehicle for wider points about attitudes to accents and this is a useful approach. The style matches the chosen form effectively and the register seems appropriate for the target publication. Had the opening been sustained, this might have stayed in Level 5 throughout, but as it is a mark somewhere towards the higher end of Level 4 is perhaps more appropriate.

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engaging, witty and genuinely effective opening paragraph. • Engaging style in flashes elsewhere. • Lightness of touch attempted to make material work for non-specialist audience. • Range of relevant references to research and surveys. • Key concepts of prestige and code-switching mentioned. • Understanding of (and sympathy for) reasons for changing accents is evident. • Some ideas from the text are referred to. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Less secure conclusion. • Some vagueness at the ends of paragraphs. • Development of argument and cohesive links could have been tighter. • Linguistic references are not as clear as they might be or fully explained for audience. • Roots of social prejudices to accents aren't always explained. • Linguistic arbitrariness of attitudes to accents isn't covered. • Could more use have been made of the source text?

Version 1.0
First published 17/09/2015
Last updated 17/09/2015