

AS English Language Paper 2 SAMs commentary

This resource explains how the questions in the specimen assessment materials for AS Paper 2 address the assessment objectives, with some suggestions as to how each task might be approached. This is not intended to be an exhaustive list of every point that could be made, but it provides teachers and students with some guidance that will support their work on this paper.

AS Paper 2 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.

Text A is part of a conversation among staff in a restaurant kitchen.

The AOs assessed in this question are A01 and A02 (A01 10 marks, A02 20 marks), and this is made clear to candidates through the question wording. A01 is pointed to through "Discuss the idea" (with the definition of "discuss" being "present key points") as well as "you should use your own supporting examples and the data in Text A, below". A02 is pointed to through "a person's language might be affected by their occupation" and "you should discuss concepts and issues from language study".

A01: Apply appropriate methods of language analysis, using associated terminology and coherent written expression

In order to discuss the idea that a person's language might be affected by their occupation (with reference to the text and to ideas from language study), students will need to apply appropriate methods of language analysis to the context of occupational language. They will need to apply these to the occupational language data provided, for example by referring to lexis and pragmatics.

In their response to this question, students will need to use correct and relevant terminology for the context in order to successfully discuss the idea that a person's language might be affected by their occupation. For example, the use of semantic fields, occupational vocabulary and particular types of interaction.

Students will need to use coherent written expression in their answer.

A02: Demonstrate critical understanding of concepts and issues relevant to language use

In discussing the idea that a person's language might be affected by their occupation, students will be able to demonstrate critical understanding of concepts and issues relevant to language use in an occupational context. For example, they might look to explore power relationships, expectations of behaviour in certain settings, rule-following and/or playfulness and rule-breaking.

AS Paper 2 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.

Table 1 gives details of the turns, speaking time and interruptions at a staff meeting.

The AOs assessed in this question are A01 and A02 (A01 10 marks, A02 20 marks), and this is made clear to students through the question wording. A01 is pointed to through "Discuss the idea" (with the definition of "discuss" being "present key points"), as well as "you should use your own supporting examples and the data in Table 1, below". A02 is pointed to through "women and men use language differently" and "you should discuss concepts and issues from language study".

A01: Apply appropriate methods of language analysis, using associated terminology and coherent written expression

In order to discuss the idea that women and men use language differently, students will need to apply appropriate methods of language analysis to the context of language use by men and women (gender). They will need to apply these to the language data provided, for example by referring to lexis, pragmatics and grammar.

In their response to this question, students will need to use correct and relevant terminology for the context in order to successfully discuss the idea that women and men use language differently. For example, gender-specific vocabulary and the meanings and functions of different types of question.

Students will need to use coherent written expression in their answer.

A02: Demonstrate critical understanding of concepts and issues relevant to language use

In discussing the idea that women and men use language differently, students will be able to demonstrate critical understanding of concepts and issues relevant to language use by women and men. For example, they might look to explain and illustrate different models for explaining gender and interaction,

refer to specific research by Coates and Cameron and/or consider wider variables such as class or social networks.

AS Paper 2 Question 3

Text B is the start of an article in which a newspaper columnist discusses a celebrity who changed her local accent.

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.

The AOs assessed in this question are A02 and A05 (A02 20 marks, A05 20 marks), and this is made clear to candidates through the question wording. A02 is pointed to through “discuss the issues surrounding people changing their accents”, and A05 is pointed to through “Write an opinion article in which you discuss”.

A02: Demonstrate critical understanding of concepts and issues relevant to language use

In writing an opinion article in which they discuss the issues surrounding people changing their accents, students will be able to demonstrate critical understanding of concepts and issues relevant to varying language use by people with different accents and dialects, and from different backgrounds (e.g. socioeconomic, class, ethnicity). They may assess ideas about identity and solidarity, for example, and explore changing attitudes to Received Pronunciation (RP) and regional accents.

A05: Demonstrate expertise and creativity in the use of English to communicate in different ways

In writing their opinion article, students will need to demonstrate expertise and creativity in their command of the English language for the purpose in question, making innovative use of form and using an appropriate register, transforming and exploring ideas relevantly and interestingly for the audience and using an engaging or entertaining style.