

English Language

Transition Work Pack #1

Instructions

Welcome to English Language! There are 4 work packs to help with your transition to English Language A Level study. These are more substantial than a normal transition pack would be, to enable you to bridge any gaps in your knowledge that may have resulted as a consequence of being locked down.

In brief these packs are:

Transition Work Pack 1, *Non-standard and Standard Language and Spoken English*

Transition Work Pack 2, *Key elements of language analysis* (to be used with Transition Work pack 3)
(Separate PDF)

Transition Work Pack 3, *supporting materials* and (Separate PDF)

Transition Work Pack 4, *Further reading* (Separate PDF)

Recording your responses to these tasks for your notes can be done on either a Word document or on lined paper. Remember to keep hold of these as you will need them when you start the course.

Transition Work Pack #1 is split into two sections –

Focus No 1. Non-Standard and Standard Language

Focus No 2. Spoken English

Work through them in that order.

Focus No 1. Non-Standard and Standard Language

Section 1. Terms of Endearment

Research task. Find a definition of dialect from a dictionary. Make a list of the terms of endearment, such as *dad* or *gran*, *darling*, *honey*, *love* that you use within your family. Do you know of any alternatives among your friends or in different parts of the country?

Make a list of words you associate with the dialect of the area you live in. Interview other members of your family/community to see if they can add to your list. Which words do you associate with older generations and which words are used by speakers of all ages? A good area of vocabulary to start with is words associated with emotions, states of mind or personality traits - *happy*, *angry*, *moody*, *grumpy*, *pleased*, *annoyed*, *drunk*, *attractive*, *unattractive*, *badly-behaved*, *stupid* etc.

Section 2. Regional Variation

Go on to the British Library website to the Sounds Familiar page -
<https://www.bl.uk/learning/langlit/sounds/index.html>

Listen to a selection of recordings on the British Library site (between five and ten) from different parts of the UK and list any unusual items of vocabulary. Use a dictionary (You may need to do this on-line for less common



dialectal words) to find the meaning of the words and try and categorise each word or phrase according to the following criteria:

- Do you hear the word/ phrase in your area or not?
- Do you and your friends use it or not?
- Do you associate it with older or younger speakers?
- Do you think it is peculiar to certain regions?

Section 3. Generational Variation

Make a list of items of vocabulary that you associate with the older generation in your community? Vocabulary related to technology, fashion and lifestyle is particularly prone to change and therefore a good starting point - ask older members of your family/community for their contributions.

Make a list of words or phrases that you use that would sound out of place if used by older speakers? Terms of approval and disapproval – words for 'good' or 'bad' – are very often readily identified with a particular generation and so might be an interesting area of research.

How do you usually form the past tense of the verb 'to be'? Do you or your friends ever use non-standard forms? If so, can you observe any pattern? Make a list of non-standard past tenses that you hear during the course of an average day at school/at home/among friends.

Section 4. Media Variation

Make a list of non-standard grammatical constructions you come across while listening to the radio or watching a television programme. Programmes that feature members of the public - radio phone-ins or 'reality' television shows - are ideally suited for this activity. Try and categorise each construction according to the following criteria:

- Do you and your friends use it or not?
- Do you associate it with older or younger speakers?
- Do you think it is peculiar to certain regions?

Section 5. Dialect Variation

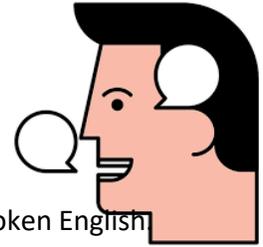
Listen to a selection of Traditional Dialect recordings on the British Library site (between five and ten) from different parts of England and list any items of vocabulary that you consider to be old-fashioned. Use a dictionary to find the meaning of the words and try and categorise each word or phrase according to the following criteria:

- Do you and your friends use the word/ phrase or not?
- Do you still hear it used by older speakers in your area?
- Do you think it is peculiar to certain regions?

Interview your friends and family about their attitudes to accents and the use of dialect. You could create a survey to see which accents are more acceptable. Are there some accents that people find off-putting? Why? Do people create judgements based on accents – better educated or less? Are there stereotypes linked to particular accents?

You will be asked to reflect on your observations on non-standard and standard English in your first term studying A Level

Focus No 2. Spoken English



Section 1 – /g r æ s/ or /g r ɑ: s/ ?

Below is a basic version on the International Phonetic Alphabet used for transcribing spoken English

Consonants		Vowels	
p	<i>pen, copy, happen</i>	ɪ	<i>kit, bid, hymn, minute</i>
b	<i>back, baby, job</i>	e	<i>dress, bed, head, many</i>
t	<i>tea, tight, button</i>	æ	<i>trap, bad</i>
d	<i>day, ladder, odd</i>	ɒ	<i>lot, odd, wash</i>
k	<i>key, clock, school</i>	ʌ	<i>strut, mud, love, blood</i>
g	<i>get, giggle, ghost</i>	ʊ	<i>foot, good, put</i>
tʃ	<i>church, match, nature</i>	i:	<i>fleece, sea, machine</i>
dʒ	<i>judge, age, soldier</i>	eɪ	<i>face, day, break</i>
f	<i>fat, coffee, rough, photo</i>	aɪ	<i>price, high, try</i>
v	<i>view, heavy, move</i>	ɔɪ	<i>choice, boy</i>
θ	<i>thing, author, path</i>	u:	<i>goose, two, blue, group</i>
ð	<i>this, other, smooth</i>	əʊ	<i>goat, show, no</i>
s	<i>soon, cease, sister</i>	aʊ	<i>mouth, now</i>
z	<i>zero, music, roses, buzz</i>	ɪə	<i>near, here, weary</i>
ʃ	<i>ship, sure, n<u>a</u>tional</i>	eə	<i>square, fair, various</i>
ʒ	<i>pleas<u>u</u>re, vis<u>i</u>on</i>	ɑ:	<i>start, father</i>
h	<i>hot, whole, ahead</i>	ɔ:	<i>thought, law, north, war</i>
m	<i>more, hammer, sum</i>	ʊə	<i>poor, jury, cure</i>
n	<i>nice, know, funny, sun</i>	ɜ:	<i>nurse, stir, learn, refer</i>
ŋ	<i>ring, anger, thanks, sung</i>	ə	<i><u>a</u>bout, comm<u>o</u>n, stand<u>a</u>rd</i>
l	<i>light, valley, feel</i>	i	<i>happ<u>y</u>, radi<u>a</u>te, glor<u>i</u>ous</i>
r	<i>right, wrong, sorry, arrange</i>	u	<i>thank you<u>u</u>, influ<u>e</u>nce, situ<u>a</u>tion</i>
j	<i>yet, use, beauty, few</i>	ŋ	<i>sudd<u>e</u>nly, cott<u>o</u>n</i>
w	<i>wet, one, when, queen</i>	l	<i>mid<u>d</u>le, met<u>a</u>l</i>
ʔ	<i>(glottal stop) depart<u>m</u>ent, foot<u>b</u>all</i>	'	<i>(stress mark)</i>

It enables linguists to record the sound of English. For instance, some of you will pronounce the word ‘grass’ with a short ‘a’ sound which would look like this in IPA /gr æ s/. Some will use a longer ‘a’ sound which would equate to /g r a: s/.

Some simple words follow – notice that repeated letters are not necessarily repeated sounds.

words	transcriptions
<i>hut</i>	/hʌt/
<i>but</i>	/bʌt/
<i>shut</i>	/ʃʌt/
<i>mutt</i>	/mʌt/
<i>jut</i>	/dʒʌt/
<i>let</i>	/let/
<i>set</i>	/set/
<i>met</i>	/met/
<i>bet</i>	/'bet/
<i>jet</i>	/'dʒet/

TASK

For some of the dialect words you identified in your dialect work – practise writing them out using the phonetic alphabet

Section 2 - Transcribing speech

Below is a transcript from an interview and a link to it on YouTube. Watch the clip alongside the transcript. Notice how the transcript is trying to represent how the conversation sounds. It includes phonetically represented words /kɔz/ for ‘coz’ and /vəʊ?/ for ‘vote’. Russell Brand ends this word with ‘glottal stop’ represented by ‘?’ in the transcription. It should also give a sense of where conversation overlaps and how words are emphasised by the speaker. The transcript comes from the following interview, and starts at about 0.26 seconds in

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RDZm9_uKtyo

Extract 3: Transcript of an Interview

Key:

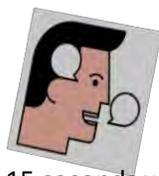
- (.) micropause
- (2) timed pause (in seconds)
- (.h) pause with an intake of breath
- ca. incomplete word
- // overlapping speech
- = smooth latch on
- {laughs} paralinguistic features
- bad** emphatic stress
- l:: stretched or prolonged speech
- ↑funny↑ raised pitch
- FAT increased volume
- accel speech that is getting faster (underlined)
- rall speech that is getting slower (underlined)
- / gwi:di:/ phonemic transcription reflecting pronunciation

RB – Russell Brand

EM – Ed Miliband

RB Ed (.) thank you (.) for coming to **talk** to us here (.) in the run up to the elections
 we're **very** grateful to //you /koz/ you must be (.) **bloody** worn out are you?=
 EM // pleasure = ʃnoʃ
 busy but um (.) **glad** to be here
 RB a /ɒʔ/ of us feel that /wɒʔsæpənd/ in politics is that there's these (.h) **unelected** (.)
powerful elite (.) that (1) **really** control things from (.) **behind** the scenes ʃnoʃ in
 a **conspiratorial** way just in an (.) **economic** way and those **powerful** elite have
 accel really /gɒʔ/ their talons /ɪntə/ the Tory /pɑ:ʔi:/ for ʃmeʃ and for a /ɒʔə/ people that
 accel /dəʊnʔ//vəʊʔ/ that's where that frustration emanates // from it certainly isn't apathy
 EM // mmm
 RB Ed it's a sense of what's the /pɔɪnʔ/ what **we** feel // is like well they /ʃənəʊ/ the
 EM // mmm

RB suffragettes (.) they may have given their **lives** // for the **right** to /vəʊʔ/ but people
 EM // mmm
 RB in power worked /auʔ/ OK we've /gɒʔə/ give votes to women (.) let's just now
 rall make sure that their votes (1) mean **very little** and th. /ʃənəʊ/ since then **since**
 suffrage **since** the /raɪʔ/ of women to /vəʊʔ/ (.) /wɒʔ/ has //**meaningfully** occurred
 EM // j. th. th. th. that's
 totally wrong
 RB go on /meɪʔ/
 EM well look workers' **rights** the national /eɪθ/ service the miniumum wage {laughs} I
 mean (.) lesbian and gay rights now look the **whole** point /əbauʔ/ this is that they
 accel they **happen** | | I don't actually take the view that (.) some politicians take which is
all about the great politicians who make the change happen of course it's **people**
 that make it happen but it's a combination of (1) politics and // people
 RB // mmm



TASK

Try to transcribe at least 10 to 15 seconds worth of a conversation. This could either be from the TV or a YouTube clip or even one you have recorded at home. NB that you must always ask for permission before recording anyone's conversations! Check your transcriptions against professional ones that you can access online.

End of Work Pack

You should now move on to "Transition Work Pack 2, Key elements of language analysis." This work book references sections of Transition work Pack 3 so you might want to have this open alongside it.