

When approaching the theoretical essay question in the examination, you need to have an awareness of how your response will meet the requirements of the examination Assessment Objectives (AOs).

Here is a brief reminder of these AOs:

AO1 (out of 20 marks):

- Method of analysis
- Use of range of terminology
- Quality of written expression

AO2 (out of 20 marks):

- Critical understanding of concepts and issues
- Concise textual support (purposeful selection from the springboard and illustrating with own examples)

AO3 (out of 20 marks):

- Discussion of contextual factors and how they shape meaning

In practice, applying the Assessment Objectives to your response will mean demonstrating the following key skills:

1. Engage with the springboard material
2. Create a sense of debate
3. Make use of relevant theoretical evidence
4. Widen the context of application

The resources which follow engage with these four key skills, by using the 2017 mark scheme and outstanding exemplar response to 'reverse engineer' the process by which an outstanding candidate can move from learning the material, to synthesising that material, and finally demonstrating the use of that knowledge in the examination essay.

1. How to effectively engage with the springboard material

Your starting point for approaching the construction of an exam style response should always be the springboard material itself. AO1 asks you to apply appropriate methods of *language analysis*, which means you need to engage with the springboard material in a systematic and critical manner, structuring a coherent argument, a thread, which runs through the entire response.

You need to:

- Scrutinise the material carefully
- Identify the key critical concepts being explored
- Begin to formulate the debate your essay will explore

<p>1. Social accents: consider the different accent variations you have studied in class</p> <p>3. Lower-social-class accent and low social status: consider the links between accent, dialect and social status</p>	<p>Social accents are not bad in any linguistic sense. Nor are any individual vowel and consonant pronunciations bad in themselves. It must be clear that, if it is not bad to pronounce hour and our identically, it cannot be bad to pronounce <i>hill</i> and <i>ill</i> the same either. The only bad thing about lower-social-class accents is that they symbolise low social status. The majority of people who do not speak with a BBC accent therefore run the risk of being discriminated against by undemocratic individuals and institutions in certain social and occupational situations.</p> <p>Chapter 7 'Bad Accents?' (Penguin 1992)</p>	<p>2. Not bad in any linguistic sense: consider the links between 'good' and 'bad' as judgements and linguistic concepts you have studied</p> <p>4. Discriminated against... in certain social and occupational situations: consider how non-Standard English accents and dialects are perceived</p>
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Using this extract as a starting point, analyse and evaluate social attitudes to accent and dialect.

Core Tasks:

1. In the annotated example springboard material above, look at the four key highlighted phrases. Consider how these have been identified as the key aspects of the springboard.
2. Based on your classroom studies, briefly note the different points you would make for each of the four highlighted areas.



3. Organise your notes using the following method:
 - a. Introduce the concept
 - b. Illustrate the concept
 - c. Develop the critical discussion
 - d. Widen the context of the debate

Extension Tasks:

1. Self-assess the quality and usefulness of your own notes by comparing them to the Teacher Notes.
2. Use a different coloured pen to add any details, concepts or examples you had not already considered.
3. Use the notes you have compiled to write an extended paragraph for one of the sections.
4. Using three different coloured highlighters (one for each AO), identify where you think you have addressed the requirements of each AO.

Teacher Notes

Some suggested areas of exploration for your lessons (linked to the mark scheme):

1. *Social accents are not bad in any linguistic sense*

- **Introduce** this section by referring to the concepts of RP and Standard English
- **Illustrate** these concepts by exploring Trudgill's experiment on the relative attractiveness of British regional accents
- **Develop** this discussion by examining the role of accommodation theory e.g. code switching
- **Widen** the discussion by examining the stereotyping of speakers from different regions with identification of specific phonological features of particular accents (such as glottal stopping or L-vocalisation)
- **Further develop** the discussion by exploring the range and nature of accents in the media, including areas such as news reporting, sports commentary and advertising



2. *Social accents are **not bad in any linguistic sense***

- **Introduce** the prescriptivism versus descriptivism debate, including its historical basis
- **Illustrate** these concepts by exploring the significance of language change in explaining dialectal variation with Standard English sometimes regularising forms (“you” as a second person pronoun for both singular and plural as opposed to “thou”, “thee” and “ye”) and sometimes rejecting regularisation (such as some dialects’ standardising of irregular verbs - e.g. “I seen”)
- **Develop** the discussion by examining the concepts of overt and covert prestige
- **Widen** the discussion by introducing attitudes to accent and dialect in education with some awareness of the “gatekeeping” role of Standard English

3. *...lower-social-class accents...symbolise low social status*

- **Introduce** connections between RP and educational attainment (e.g. professional class) and between RP and class belonging
- **Illustrate** your discussion by examining how the lack of an RP accent can lead to stigmatisation in certain occupational situations but not others (e.g. consider attitudes to regional voices in national as opposed to regional BBC newsreaders versus attitudes to diverse regional voices in BBC sports commentators)
- **Develop** the discussion by examining Howard Giles’ experiment on accent and attitudes to capital punishment
- **Widen** to the discussion to examine the Worcester College of Higher Education study of attitudes to criminality and regional accents

4. *...people who do not speak in a BBC accent...risk...being discriminated against...*

- **Introduce** the frequent distinction between attitudes to lexical variation (e.g. Scottish use of the adjective “wee”) and the more heavily stigmatised grammatical variation (e.g. regularising of verbs such as “they was”)
- **Illustrate** and **develop** the discussion to consider recent developments in accents and dialects in Britain, including some discussion of Estuary English and dialect levelling
- **Widen** the discussion to explore the significance of ethnicity in accent and dialect



studies with an account of the influence of AAVE of Black American English on the spoke discourse of many young people

Please note: this approach is merely a suggestion; other approaches may yield equally fruitful discussion.



2. How to create a sense of debate

One interpretation of the springboard material would be to view it as a debate between prescriptivist and descriptivist attitudes to accent and dialect.

Core Tasks

1. Using the table on the next page, categorise the statements below as either Prescriptivist or Descriptivist.
2. Once you have decided to which category each statement belongs, pair up statements from the respective categories to begin to build a structured debate between proponents of the two opposing viewpoints.
3. For each statement, provide your own examples of different studies/situations to illustrate the critical point being made.
4. Which of the ten statements below does not naturally belong in either category (prescriptivist or descriptivist) and why?
5. Write an essay which makes use of the statements and illustrations from both sides of the debate, and your own conclusion about the clash of prescriptivism and descriptivism in attitudes to accent and dialect.
6. Using comparative judgement, compare your own essay alongside the model full marks answer provided.

Extension

Write your own action points for improving your response so that it more closely resembles the full mark exemplar response.

- a. David Crystal argues that Standard English is not the English language but only a variety of it nor is RP the English accent. The term 'English language' encompasses many local, regional and national variations.
- b. John Honey holds negative views on the matter of accent/dialect variation and change.
- c. The debate, as presented by Peter Trudgill and Lars-Gunnar Anderson, is blurring the lines between 'good' and 'bad' when it comes to accents and dialects.



- d. One root of prescriptivism currently lies in the field of media.
- e. Since the invention of the printing press in the 15th century 'Standard English' has been adopted to report stories through a process of standardisation and with early transcriptions of radio and television we know that Received Pronunciation, or RP, alternatively referred to in the stimulus in the noun phrase "a BBC accent" was adopted too.
- f. Historically (although this attitude is changing), the use of Standard English and an RP accent in the media has been viewed as 'the norm', leaving room for social accents to be seen as 'bad' (the predictive adjective as selected by Trudgill and Anderson).
- g. Honey (1997) believes that Standard English should be taught in schools and other varieties should be corrected in order to give children equal opportunities in terms of jobs in the future.
- h. Milroy and Milroy (1995) believe in equality for all dialects as children acquire these from their other social groupings.
- i. Linguist Paul Kerswill claims RP to be a dying art as less than 2% of the British population speak it.

Teacher Notes

Prescriptivist Points		Descriptivist Points	
Statement		Statement	Illustrative Example
John Honey holds negative views on the matter of accent/dialect variation and change.		David Crystal argues that Standard English is not the English language but only a variety of it nor is RP the English accent. The term 'English language' encompasses many local, regional and national variations.	New accents and dialects are being created and destroyed all the time, e.g. African American Vernacular English and its pervasive influence on the spoken discourse of many young people worldwide
One root of prescriptivism currently lies in the field of media.	Pronunciation, or RP, alternatively referred to in the stimulus in the noun phrase "a BBC accent", was adopted too	Historically (although this attitude is changing), the use of Standard English and an RP accent in the media has been viewed as 'the norm', leaving room for social accents to be seen as 'bad' (the predictive adjective as selected by Trudgill and Anderson).	Consider attitudes to regional voices in national as opposed to regional BBC newsreaders versus attitudes to diverse regional voices in BBC sports commentators, as well as the spread of Estuary English
Since the invention of the printing press in the 15th century 'Standard English' has been adopted to report stories through a process of standardisation and with early transcriptions of radio and television we know that Received	<i>Consider the role played by, for example, Pathe newsreels in the perpetuation of the view that a particular way of speaking English is more acceptable in public formal discourse</i>	Linguist Paul Kerswill claims RP to be a dying art as less than 2% of the British population speak it.	Compare how the current Queen and Prince Philip speak English to the way of speaking of younger royals, such as Prince Harry

Pronunciation, or RP, alternatively referred to in the stimulus in the noun phrase “a BBC accent”, was adopted too.			
Honey (1997) believes that Standard English should be taught in schools and other varieties should be corrected in order to give children equal opportunities in terms of jobs in the future.	Critically evaluate this statement in the light of your study of extracts of the spoken interactions between pupils and their peers and between staff and pupils in recent television documentaries, e.g. ‘Educating Yorkshire’ or ‘Educating Essex’	Milroy and Milroy (1995) believe in equality for all dialects as children acquire these from their other social groupings.	Critically evaluate this statement in the light of your study of extracts of the spoken interactions between pupils and their peers and between staff and pupils in recent television documentaries, e.g. ‘Educating Yorkshire’ or ‘Educating Essex’

CHALLENGE:

Statement (c) does not belong readily in either category, as it recognises the subjective and constantly changing nature of judgements about what constitutes ‘good’ or ‘bad’ English accents and dialects.

Full Marks Model Answer

Both accents and dialects and the perceptions of these are changing. Social demographics change is enhancing the formation of new accents and dialects; for example, the new town of Milton Keynes, the influx of migrants into areas such as Birmingham and Leicester and also the complex network of cultural influences which are affecting the way the youth is talking while some descriptivists such as linguist David Crystal are appreciating and examining this dynamic field, prescriptivist linguists such as John Honey hold negative views on the matter. The biggest debate is social attitudes in the question of ‘status’ (overt prestige) or ‘solidarity’ (covert prestige) and, as presented by Peter Trudgill and Lars-Gunnar Anderson, the blurring of the lines between ‘good’ and ‘bad’ when it comes to accents and dialects.

The root of prescriptivism currently lies in two fields – media and education. Since the invention of the printing press in the 15th century ‘Standard English’ has been adopted to report stories



through process of standardisation and with early transcriptions of radio and television we know that Received Pronunciation, or RP, alternatively referred to in the stimulus in the noun phrase “a BBC accent”, was adopted too. Thus meaning, the use of Standard English and an RP accent in the media has been viewed as ‘the norm’ leaving room for social accents to be seen as ‘bad’ (the predictive adjective as selected by Trudgill and Anderson). To exemplify this point a Telegraph news report once reported on the speciality Bristol brewery and its products. A bar maid was interviewed and her speech was written to reflect her accent as seen in the simple interrogative “so enuf chattin shall ee pour yus a draf?” and beneath the barmaid’s interrogative was a parenthetical ‘Standard English’ version of what was being said as seen in the parenthetical compound declarative sentence “(Let us not proceed with this interview anymore and I shall pour you a beer)”. This patronising inclusion of the ‘translation’ perpetuates the stereotypes created by portraying those who speak in a nationally recognised accent and dialect to be of higher importance.

As mentioned education is also where the roots of the perceptions of accent and dialect can stem from. With the two main debates here being that of Honey (1997) who believes that standard English should be taught in schools and other varieties should be corrected in order to give children equal opportunities in terms of jobs in the future and linguists Milroy and Milroy (1995) who believe in equality for all dialects as children acquire these from their other social groupings Honey’s argument has recently prevailed in a borough of London where a local primary school sent a letter out to parents asking them to correct their child’s spoken grammar.

The letter included a list of bullet points such as the simple imperative sentence “When they say ‘I seen that dog’ teach then to say ‘I saw that dog’”. This example highlights the importance of perceptions of accents and dialects even at a young age, whereas Trudgill and Anderson present their view in a complex sentence “it must be clear that, if it is not bad to pronounce hour and our identically, it cannot be bad to pronounce hill and ill the same either.” This clear viewpoint sides mainly with that of Milroy and Milroy.

It is important to recognise that attitudes are changing; in the stimulus, Trudgill and Anderson reference “the majority of people who do not speak with a BBC accent” and this phenomenon is at



the heart of changing accents and dialects. Linguist Paul Kerswill claims RP to be a dying art as less than 2% of the British population speak it. It is said to be being replaced by 'Estuary English' – a levelled South Eastern dialect. The process of levelling has been seen throughout the UK due to the ease of mobility and the collaboration of groups from many areas and so subsequently social attitudes are less prominent. However, in some areas this is not the case.

For example, in central London, the term 'Multicultural London English' is becoming more common by the second, something which tabloid newspapers are calling "Jafaican". The complex web of ethnolects now inhabiting London has given rise to MLE which characteristically sees the retaining of the 'h' consonant, the frequent use of the indefinite vocative "man" and non-standard verb forms; for example "Ross man the team is gonna be in my gaff man" (a simple declarative utterance) whilst this natural progression of MLE is underway, new perceptions, mostly from the media are circulating. For example, a Telegraph article was headlined with the compound declarative sentence "Jafaican may be cool but it sounds ridiculous" giving way to these negative perceptions.

Trudgill and Anderson use the past tense stative verb "discriminated" to coin these who do not speak with a 'BBC accent'. However some may argue with this as, in more recent times, the concept of solidarity/covert prestige is taking precedence. For example, the Yorkshire accent is seen as being more trustworthy and warm and the Irish accent is connected with attractiveness according to a survey conducted in the United Kingdom. And so although certain accents are grouped discriminately, this is not always in a negative sense and this has to be appreciated.

As linguist David Crystal argues, Standard English is not the English language but only a variety of it nor is RP the English accent. The term 'English language' encompasses many local, regional and national variations. Whilst social attitudes will always be present regarding accents and dialects, whether this be a result of media perpetuation of old stereotypes or the education system favouring one variety of English over another, it cannot be denied that new accents and dialects are being created and destroyed all the time and there are many interlinking cultural, demographic, political factors which are influencing this change. This too, giving rise to changing perceptions.



60 marks

A01: 20

A02: 20

A03: 20



3. How to make use of relevant theoretical evidence

As with the other aspects of constructing an effective essay response to the springboard material, making use of relevant theoretical evidence in your writing must begin with that springboard material. The quote used as the springboard will usually (although not necessarily) be taken from the work of language theorist(s) you have studied. If it is not a direct quotation from the work of the critic(s), the springboard will at least make use of their ideas.

Core Task

1. Read the springboard data reprinted below:

Social accents are not bad in any linguistic sense. Nor are any individual vowel and consonant pronunciations bad in themselves. It must be clear that, if it is not bad to pronounce *hour* and *our* identically, it cannot be bad to pronounce *hill* and *ill* the same either. The only bad thing about lower-social-class accents is that they symbolise low social status. The majority of people who do not speak with a BBC accent therefore run the risk of being discriminated against by undemocratic individuals and institutions in certain social and occupational situations.

Chapter 7 'Bad Accents?' (Penguin 1992)

Discuss the following questions about the extract above. For each discussion point, you need to bring in other critical theories you have studied in the course.

- a. What is implied by the phrase 'social accents'?
- b. What does the extract above imply is the link between accent and social status?
- c. If judgments about accents are described by Trudgell and Andersson as being 'undemocratic', what does that adjective imply about these critics' position on the prescriptivist versus descriptivist debate?
- d. The extract above seems to suggest that individuals who speak with a 'lower-social-class' accent 'run the risk of being discriminated against in certain social and occupational situations'. What are these situations, and are there any other situations where such 'lower-social-class' accents do not lead to negative judgments being made about the speaker?

Extension

Examine the links between lower-social-class accents and upper-social-class accents and the concepts of *overt prestige* and *covert prestige*. Illustrate your ideas with a range of examples.

Teacher Notes

a. What is implied by the phrase 'social accents'?

Describing accents as 'social' implies that the way one speaks is indicative of one's belonging to a specific social group, and that one's belonging to that group suggests that there is a link between accent and social identity. In this viewpoint, a speaker's accent is viewed as being not merely representative of their region of origin, but also their levels of educational achievement and, in some unspoken way, their 'intelligence' as well as their class background.

In other words, accents in isolation from society cannot be classified as 'good' or 'bad' except insofar as society itself imputes to those accents positive or negative characteristics.

Some critical and theoretical perspectives to consider here are:

- Attitudes to RP as a prestige form;
- The role of accommodation theory and code switching, and;
- Peter Trudgill's study on the relative attractiveness of different regional British accents.

b. What does the extract above imply is the link between accent and social status?

Accents can be indicative of one's social status because specific phonological features of particular accents are not only linked to geographical variation, but also to class and levels of educational achievement. For example, the dropping of the 'h' in the pronunciation of the noun 'hill', rendering it as 'ill', is seen to indicate that the speaker belongs a lower social class regardless of the speaker's region of origin. According to social identity theory, by Giles and others, as people become more educated, they choose to self-identify as belonging to a group which is characterised by a smoothing of the 'rough' edges of accents, and when joining this group, speakers tend to mimic that group's speech patterns in order to engender a sense of belonging to a group they perceive as having more prestige.



Some critical perspectives/concepts you may consider here are:

- Howard Giles' accommodation theory
- Tajfel and Turner's social identity theories
- Hypercorrection

c. If judgments about accents are described by Trudgell and Andersson as being 'undemocratic', what does that adjective imply about these critics' position on the prescriptivist versus descriptivist debate?

The implication here is that the critical quotation in the springboard material can be described as prescriptivist rather than descriptivist. The connotations of the adjective 'undemocratic' imply that social judgments placed on bad accents lead to unfair distributions of power, because those with a 'lower-social-class' accent are often excluded from positions of influence or voice in social institutions.

A critical perspective to consider here might be this one, written by linguist David Crystal, in which he argues that accents and their variety are a source of beauty in the English language:

<https://www.theguardian.com/books/2018/jan/13/pronunciation-complaints-phonetics-sounds-appealing-david-crystal>

d. The extract above seems to suggest that individuals who speak with a 'lower-social-class' accent 'run the risk of being discriminated against in certain social and occupational situations'. What are these situations, and are there any other situations where such 'lower-social-class' accents do not lead to negative judgments being made about the speaker?

Students should be encouraged to think of real world scenarios where lower-social-class accents can lead to discrimination and prejudice. For example, to what extent would a person speaking with a heavy West Yorkshire accent calling a customer service complaints line be treated with respect and professionalism when compared with an RP speaker making exactly the same call to the same complaints service line?

Alternatively, students should be encouraged to think of situations where accent is seen as being



indicative of one's loyalty to a particular group. For example, Labov's study of the speakers in Martha's Vineyard would prove fertile grounds for discussion. Although the speakers in Labov's study are not representative of a specific social class, the principle that speaking one's own accent is evidence of one's pride at belonging to one's group could be applied to other situations where this might be relevant to class. For example, Peter Kay's portrayals of the subculture of northern English working men's clubs.

Extension

Examine the links between lower-social-class accents and upper-social-class accents and the concepts of *overt prestige* and *covert prestige*. Illustrate your ideas with a range of examples.

Students are encouraged to consider, for example, how it is not only the larger society which imposes its norms and 'acceptable standards', or prestige, on a particular manner of speaking, but also sub groups within that society. Such groups may often ascribe prestige to ways of speaking which expressly oppose the dominant social norm. For example, students could consider the growth of African American Vernacular English (AAVE) and its adoption by non-African American speakers as a prestige form for young people in certain informal situations.



4. How to widen the context of application

A key aspect of A03 involves exploring how contextual factors are associated with the construction of meaning in texts. Here, students are encouraged to consider a wide range of contexts or scenarios which could be critically related to the key concepts of the springboard data. These scenarios could include spoken or written situations, as well as historical and contemporary examples of language use.

Core Task 1

A critical evaluation of **Received Pronunciation (RP)** could be widened to include discussion of the appropriateness of its application in a range of contexts. For each of the contexts given below, please create a scenario with example utterances which illustrate the possible implications of RP use.

RP is the prestige language norm in a range of formal situations. For example:

- a. The language of the classroom
- b. The language of job interviews and professional life
- c. The language of medical consultations

CHALLENGE

Think of specific examples of how the scenarios above would require an inversion of the prestige dynamics (i.e. where formality would be frowned upon rather than prized). Here are some clues:

- a. The differences in language use between the headteacher, teachers and support staff with students
- b. Professional contexts in which RP would be viewed as unrelatable (e.g. pawn shops, interviewing a cleaner)
- c. The differences between the language used by consultants, GPs, nurses or auxiliary staff

Core Task 2

A critical evaluation of accent and dialect intersect with class or group identity could be widened to include discussion of the stereotyping of accents and dialects in a range of contexts.



Speakers with regional accents and dialects tend to be the subject of class discrimination. For each of the contexts given below, please create a scenario with example utterances which illustrate the possible implications of accent, dialect and stereotyping.

- a. Fictional programmes based in 'working class' settings (e.g. *Eastenders*, *Phoenix Nights*, *Emmerdale*, *Coronation Street*)
- b. Specific regional variations in accent and dialect and how they provoke stereotyping (e.g. Brummie, Georgie, Scouse, West Country, Yorkshire, Scottish, Irish, Welsh)
- c. The link between accent and ethnicity (e.g. stereotypes associated with people who use AAVE)

CHALLENGE

Consider how Labov's study of accent and dialect in Martha's Vineyard demonstrates the degree to which accent and dialect can be seen as an expression of a desirable group identity and a signifier of one's loyalty to a particular desirable group.

Core Task 3

The model answer reproduced below was given 8/20 for A03 (Context). Read it carefully and identify at three examples of where this candidate could have improved their score for A03 by widening the context of application of their ideas and arguments.

The extract from *Bad Language* by Peter Trudgill and Lars-Gunnar Anderson focuses on 'Bad Accents'. The extract itself however does not hold a prescriptivist view.

It has a descriptivist view. This is shown by the fact that the writers have said if it is not bad to pronounce the abstract noun 'hour' and the inclusive first pronoun 'our' the same then it should not be hard to pronounce the common concrete count noun 'hill' and the abstract noun 'ill' the same.

This would be done by the chopping of the 'H' consonant in each word. This was shown by a theorist who studied a specific area and found that with regional accents tend to drop the H's a lot more than those without. The descriptivist view is also shown by the first declaration. 'Social accents are not bad in any linguistic sense'. This suggests that social accents are first as right



as any other accent and should be accepted. However, although the writers do not argue from a prescriptivist point of view, they do give the views of those who would hold this ideology. For example, as shown in the extract, a 'lower-social-class accent' would symbolise a 'low social status'. This argument is based on the class system that is present in the UK. As the extract was published along with the book in 1992, the social accents would be a lot less prominent because as suggested in the extract, they 'run the risk of being discriminated against'. It still does happen today with people being turned down for occupations due to them having an accent, but there is a wider variety of accents present, for example Estuary English, therefore it is more widely accepted because Estuary English is now spreading to different countries around the UK. That extract also identifies that individuals would be discriminated against in occupation.

The extract mentions the use of a 'BBC accent' because many presenters who worked for the BBC at that time had to speak with a formal RP accent. This shows that the BBC was also discriminating and prescriptivist. This may have been because the BBC is the forefront of the UK and how the people are like to the rest of the world. The BBC would only want to impress people with this accent, as was suggested by Giles' capital punishment theory, where he found listeners thought that RP was a lot more impressive than regional accents. However, his theory also found that listeners thought that regional accents sounded more real and relatable of the world we live in today. In addition the BBC would only have wanted RP speakers because everyone would clearly understand what is being said. This is still the case today in Royal processions where individuals such as Huw Edwards would speak because he is formal and has an RP accent. The BBC had a Royal Procession that included presenters from the likes of Matt Baker. This event had received negative responses as the speakers had accents and used their own dialects. This success that individuals today still hold a negative view of social accents and they have a prescriptivist view.

Many theorists have studied into social accents and they hold different views of what language should be like. For example, Lindsey Johns is a prescriptivist who believes that Estuary English should not be used, along with other dialects. He comments on the likes of the phrase "y'get me blud". He goes on to describe what this means for those who do not understand. For example the lexeme "blud" actually means the common concrete noun "brother". Lindsey Johns believes the



use of phrases as such would reduce the places individuals could go in the future i.e. when looking for a job. He went into a school in London to try to teach students on the correct way of how to speak so they could 'prepare' themselves for the future and where they needed to go. To back up the prescriptivist point of view, another theorist Jenny Cheshire, studied into the youth speak. She found the majority of the youth who spoke with a dialect and accent were more related crime to deviance. This could reinforce why employers may not want to employ individuals who speak like this. The social attitude towards the use of accent and dialect come along with reputation and prestige. Those who speak with more RP accent are definitely seen to have more prestige than those who do not, for example, the Queen and the current Prime Minister Theresa May. There are certain distinct features which seem to make them have a higher social class, just by the way they speak.

Even school systems are trying to reduce the use of the comparative adjective 'like' as in is seen as informal. This is being done by my Sixth Form as it is not preferred in a job interview for individuals to use this word. So it can be seen that we are taught from a young age not to use this informal lexis as it would ruin our prospects, therefore society can be seen as more prescriptivist than descriptivist.

27 marks

A01: 9

A02: 10

A03: 8

Teacher Notes

Please refer to the sections of the model answer below which have been underlined. These are the sections where the candidate has missed out on the opportunity to widen the context of their argument. Encourage students to integrate their notes from the Core and Challenge Tasks above into each of the sections underlined.

The extract from *Bad Language* by Peter Trudgill and Lars-Gunnar Anderson focuses on 'Bad Accents'. The extract itself however does not hold a prescriptivist view.



It has a descriptivist view. This is shown by the fact that the writers have said if it is not bad to pronounce the abstract noun 'hour' and the inclusive first pronoun 'our' the same then it should not be hard to pronounce the common concrete count noun 'hill' and the abstract noun 'ill' the same.

This would be done by the chopping of the 'H' consonant in each word. This was shown by a theorist who studied a specific area and found that with regional accents they tend to drop the H's a lot more than those without. The descriptivist view is also shown by the first declaration. 'Social accents are not bad in any linguistic sense'. This suggests that social accents are first as right as any other accent and should be accepted. However, although the writers do not argue from a prescriptivist point of view, they do give the views of those who would hold this ideology. For example, as shown in the extract, a 'lower-social-class accent' would symbolise a 'low social status'. This argument is based on the class system that is present in the UK. As the extract was published along with the book in 1992, the social accents would be a lot less prominent because as suggested in the extract, they 'run the risk of being discriminated against'. It still does happen today with people being turned down for occupations due to them having an accent, but there is a wider variety of accents present, for example Estuary English, therefore it is more widely accepted because Estuary English is now spreading to different countries around the UK. That extract also identifies that individuals would be discriminated against in occupation.

The extract mentions the use of a 'BBC accent' because many presenters who worked for the BBC at that time had to speak with a formal RP accent. This shows that the BBC was also discriminating and prescriptivist. This may have been because the BBC is the forefront of the UK and how the people are like to the rest of the world. The BBC would only want to impress people with this accent, as was suggested by Giles' capital punishment theory, where he found listeners thought that RP was a lot more impressive than regional accents. However, his theory also found that listeners thought that regional accents sounded more real and relatable of the world we live in today. In addition the BBC would only have wanted RP speakers because everyone would clearly understand what is being said. This is still the case today in Royal processions where individuals such as Huw Edwards would speak because he is formal and has an RP accent. The BBC had a Royal Procession that included presenters from the likes of Matt Baker. This event had received negative responses



the speakers had accent and used their own dialects. This success that individuals today still hold a negative view of social accents and they have a prescriptivist view.

Many theorists have studied social accents and they hold different views of what language should be like. For example, Lindsey Johns is a prescriptivist who believes that Estuary English should not be used, along with other dialects. He comments on the likes of the phrase “y’get me blud”. He goes on to describe what this means for those who do not understand. For example the lexeme “blud” actually means the common concrete noun “brother”. Lindsey Johns believes the use of phrases as such would reduce the places individuals could go in the future i.e. when looking for a job. He went into a school in London to try to teach students on the correct way of how to speak so they could ‘prepare’ themselves for the future and where they needed to go. To back up the prescriptivist point of view, another theorist Jenny Cheshire, studied into the youth speak. She found the majority of the youth who spoke with a dialect and accent were more related crime to deviance. This could reinforce why employers may not want to employ individuals who speak like this. The social attitude towards the use of accent and dialect come along with reputation and prestige. Those who speak with more RP accent are definitely seen to have more prestige than those who do not, for example, the Queen and the current Prime Minister Theresa May. There are certain distinct features which seem to make them have a higher social class, just by the way they speak.

Even school systems are trying to reduce the use of the comparative adjective ‘like’ as it is seen as informal. This is being done by my Sixth Form as it is not preferred in a job interview for individuals to use this word. So it can be seen that we are taught from a young age not to use this informal lexis as it would ruin our prospects, therefore society can be seen as more prescriptivist than descriptivist.

27 marks

A01: 9

A02: 10

A03: 8