

Pearson Edexcel International A Level English Language

WEN02 Additional Guidance

This is general guidance to help teachers understand how best to prepare learners for IAL English Language, Unit 2, Section B. This guidance does not relate to a particular exam series.

Section B

Assessment Objectives

- **AO2 Demonstrate critical understanding of concepts and issues relevant to language use.**
- **AO3 Analyse and evaluate how contextual factors and language features are associated with the construction of meaning.**

Learners can use all three texts in the source booklet to answer this question and should look at the features/issues presented and use them to explain how this reflects developments across the world. There are three main focuses:

- the contexts in which the variety of English is used
- other influences on the variety of language
- how the role of English as an international language is reflected in the texts.

The question stem remains the same in each series but has a different variety of English to use as a foundation to discuss how English has developed around the world. Learners must refer to data in their answer, but they can make links to other varieties which show similar features or mechanisms of language change to explain how English has developed globally. They should use what they find in the data provided as a foundation to show their knowledge and understanding of how English develops worldwide. Be aware that each source provides different things relating to the bullet points (context, influence of other languages, or international English).

When approaching question 2, the following advice can help learners get the most out of the data.

The contexts in which the variety is used

Read each text and identify any content that relates to when, where, how and with whom this variety is used (with family, with friends, in local communities, in business, as part of cultural practices, or in education). Does it change when speakers talk to different people? For example, in Bahamian English in text A (from the January 2023 exam series) the speakers mentioned they would speak more formally (standard) to their employer or a police officer. Varieties of English may vary in terms of register (formal versus informal) and style (colloquial versus academic), depending on the social context and communicative purpose. The choice of register and style can influence the tone, politeness, and appropriateness of the message. This can be linked to the context, exploring concepts such as covert prestige, identity, and code switching when talking in different contexts, or using more standard varieties in formal settings such as business and education.

Next the learners could look at the purpose of the text to explore context. This will be more relevant for some sources than others, for example, if the text is literary or an advert. Some data explicitly states when the language is used and who with, providing information for the learners to expand upon and allowing them to make links to contextual factors. Other sources provide an example context of the language in use. For example, in Indonesian English one source was a collection of English signs found in tourist sites. Learners could explore the non-standard features within the signs, the impact of American English/spelling (linking to the international role of English) and comment that certain errors did not distract from the meaning of the message.

There have been a few sources from literature, poetry and folk tales that have represented the variety's accent in using phonetic spelling to create an authentic voice or showcasing identity. The use of phonetic spelling can show connections with Text A and comments of how the language is represented in a written context to showcase identity and replicate the spoken voice in literature. There have been written Facebook comments in which non-standard spelling is used to replicate accent and grammar recreating the effect of spoken language as this mode is more conversational. Learners can discuss phonetic spelling or how this variety is presented in writing. Learners can discuss the contexts with links to the purpose/audience/mode of the communication with reference to any of the language features (AO3).

Learners should not refer to speakers as being 'unintelligent' or 'uneducated' when they use non-standard varieties as these judgmental comments can hinder their analysis. Learners should describe the characteristics of a particular language variety. Learners may mention negative

attitudes towards non-standard varieties and the associated stigma. Sometimes learners can fall into the trap of just explaining what the sources are and what they say when discussing context rather than expanding on the content to showcase their knowledge and understanding.

Other influences on this variety of language

Look at all three sets of data to identify languages which have influenced the variety. Several languages can be influencing the variety, including local languages. Learners can explore the language influences with reference to colonisation, pidgins and creoles to explain the processes involved in language change when one language is influenced by another, for example: loan words/borrowing, reduplication, semantic transparency, or Americanisms. Some learners reference the creole continuum to explain language contact in their explanation, identifying superstrate and substrate languages, lexifier, or acrolect/basilect. Learners can use examples of nonstandard features from any text which may include vocabulary/expressions, idioms, accent features like other varieties due to geographical location or contact with similar languages.

How the role of English as an international language is reflected in the texts

Learners can explore the impact of the spread of English and its role as an international language. Depending on the variety presented and issues presented within the data the candidate can discuss the following:

- The impact of colonisation
- How English has spread globally
- English's purpose as a second language or its status as an official language in certain countries. Certain models can be referenced here to explain the types of world Englishes (for example, Kachru's 3 circle model or McArthur's Circle of World English).
- The variety's role in education, business, literature, science and media- streamlining global communication
- Examples of other world English's impacting British English (additions to dictionaries)
- Prestige associated with standard varieties, or the attitude to non-standard varieties which could be linked to stigmatisation and language loss.