

# English Language



# A-Level English Language is not GCSE English Language

## GCSE English Language

**Analysing texts** looking for writer's methods

**Writing:** creative and non-fiction

## A-Level English Language

**Analysing** how the language used to **represent** a subject is influenced by contextual factors.

**Child language acquisition:** spoken and written

**Language diversity:** accent/dialect, gender, social group, and world English.

**Language change:** how and why does language change over time.

**Language investigation:** on a topic of your choice

**The power of storytelling/persuasion/information.**



# Why English Language?

The learning priorities that executives and hiring managers value most highly cut across majors.

*Very Important\* Skills for Recent College Graduates We Are Hiring*



\* 8-10 ratings on a 0-to-10 scale; 15 outcomes tested



# Main aims of the course

You will learn that:

- ▶ Language is not neutral and can be used to shaped a specific representation, identity, group, event...
- ▶ Language use can be influenced by context, who is speaking, what they are speaking about and why they are speaking.
- ▶ People have different opinions about what is good or bad spoken and written English.
- ▶ Children acquire spoken and written language in different ways

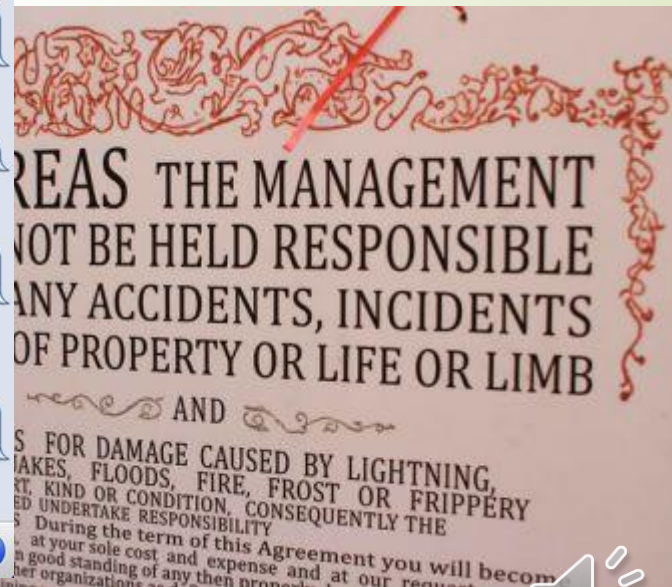




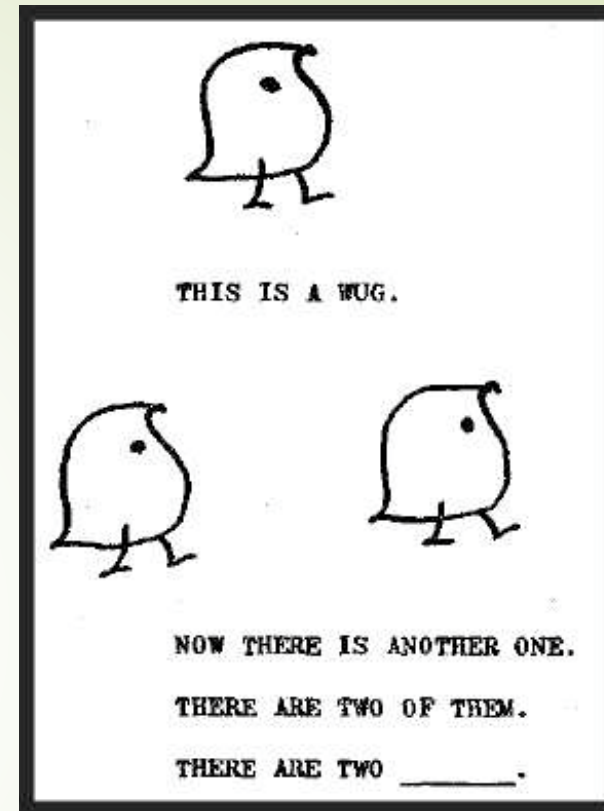
## Why is English Language so important? Representation



**MIGRANTS:  
HOW MANY  
MORE CAN  
WE TAKE?**



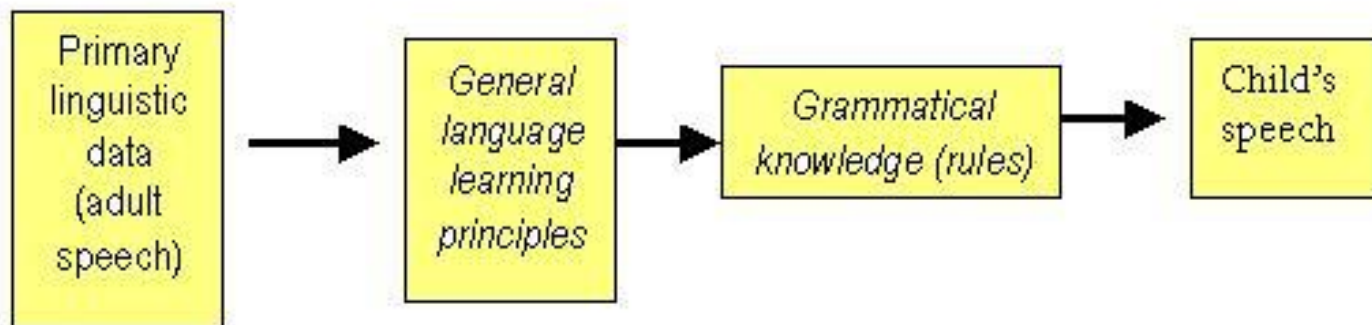
# Child Language Acquisition: spoken



INPUT

LAD

OUTPUT



# Child Language Acquisition: written

The Developmental Progression Children's Writing			
 <p>1. Pictures</p>	 <p>2. Random Scribbling</p>	 <p>3. Scribble Writing (Written in linear fashion to mimic real writing.)</p>	 <p>4. Symbols That Represent Letters</p>
 <p>5. Random Letters (No relationship between sounds of letters and what the child is trying to say.)</p>	 <p>6. Letter Strings (Progresses from left to right and top to bottom when the child "reads" his writing.)</p>	 <p>7. Letter Groups (The groups have spaces in between to resemble words.)</p>	 <p>8. Environmental Print (Child copies print found in the room, often without knowing what the words are.)</p>
<p>Thehcanr (The horse can run.)</p> <p>9. Beginning Sounds (Child begins to write simple sentences using sight words and just the beginning sounds of words.)</p>	<p>We wn to the s (We went to the store.)</p> <p>10. Early Inventive Spelling (Includes the same elements as the previous level, but with more consonant sounds represented and spaces between words.)</p>	<p>To daye i wot to play witht the white board and the shapex and I won to piny with My fen (Today I want to play with the white board and the shapes, and I want to play with my friend.)</p> <p>11. Inventive Spelling (Has the same elements as the previous level, but with more sounds per word written, including the vowels. Some conventional spelling patterns may appear.)</p>	<p>One day I saw my Frid it was Israel and Antonio and They got lost I fad Thim. The end (One day, I saw my friends, I saw Israel and Anthony and they got lost, I found them, The end.)</p> <p>12. Transitional Writing (Includes all of the previous elements, plus some real spellings of words with silent letters and other spelling patterns. Punctuation is beginning to appear.)</p>





## Language Diversity: accent and dialect

Can any British English sociolinguists vouch for the reliability of this chart? Also, which is more common here in Brum?



### **'It's had a lasting impact': students on being bullied over their accents**

Past and present university students talk about their experiences of being made to feel out of place

#### **'It made feel like I did not belong'**

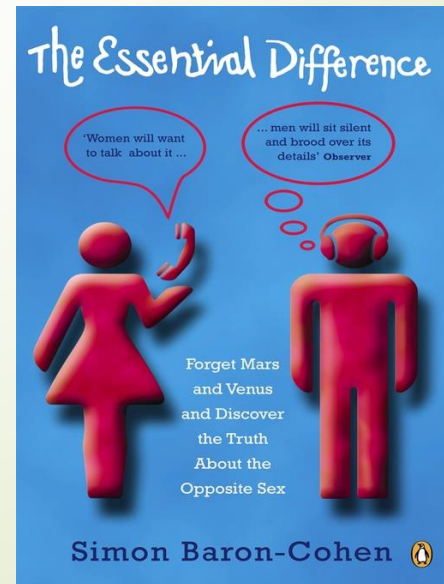
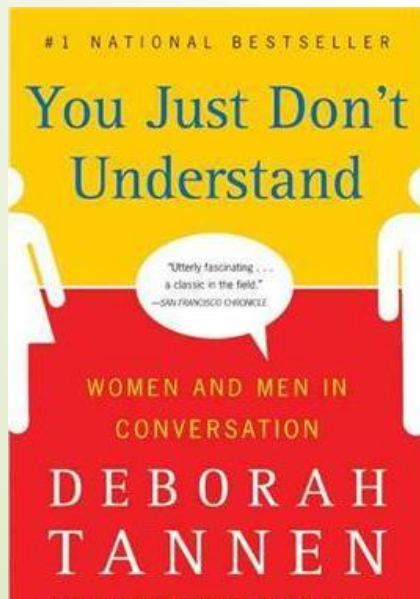
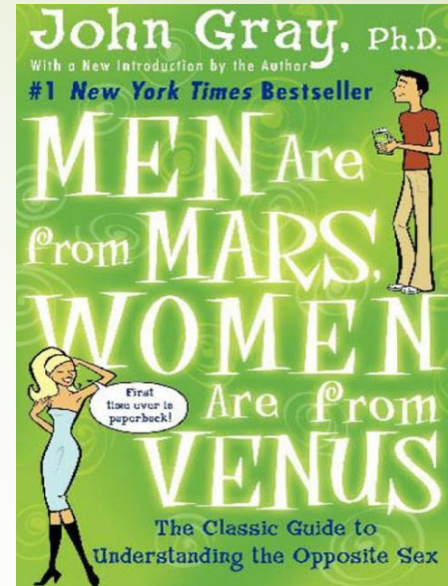
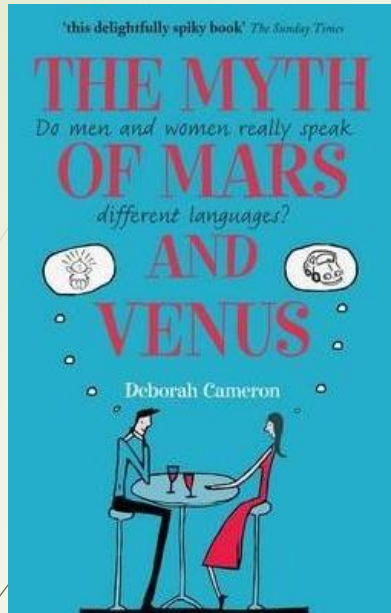
**Nina White, 26, from Stockton-on-Tees, studied English and theatre at the University of Warwick**

"It sounds ridiculous, but I only realised I had what people regarded as a strong regional accent when I first began my undergraduate studies. Mocking of my accent was immediate and I was shocked at the perceptions of people from the north-east. The perception of me was that if I had a drink I would become aggressive and scrappy, and this was all because I was from the north. I am neither of those things

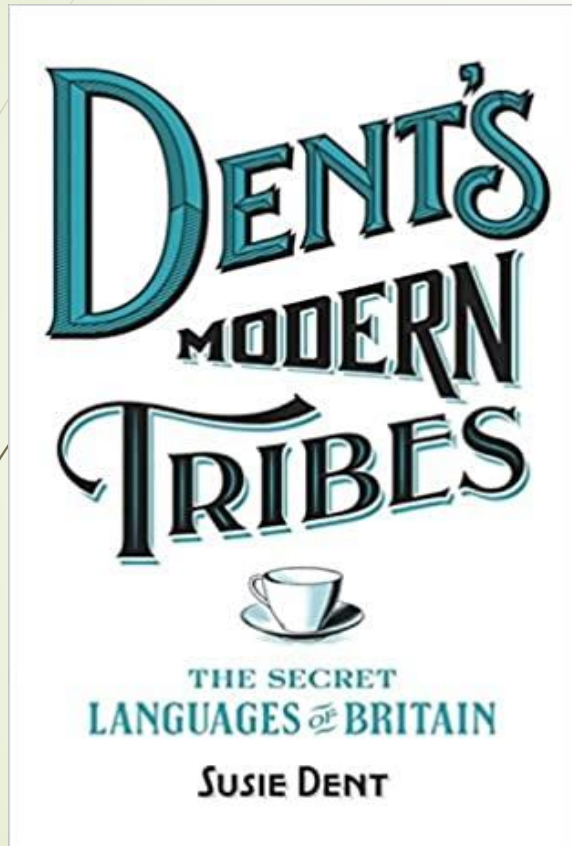




# Language Diversity: gender



## Language Diversity: social groups



*You  
sweat!*



*Lots of  
disco  
rice in  
this bin.*





# Language Diversity: world English

## THE CIRCLE OF WORLD ENGLISH

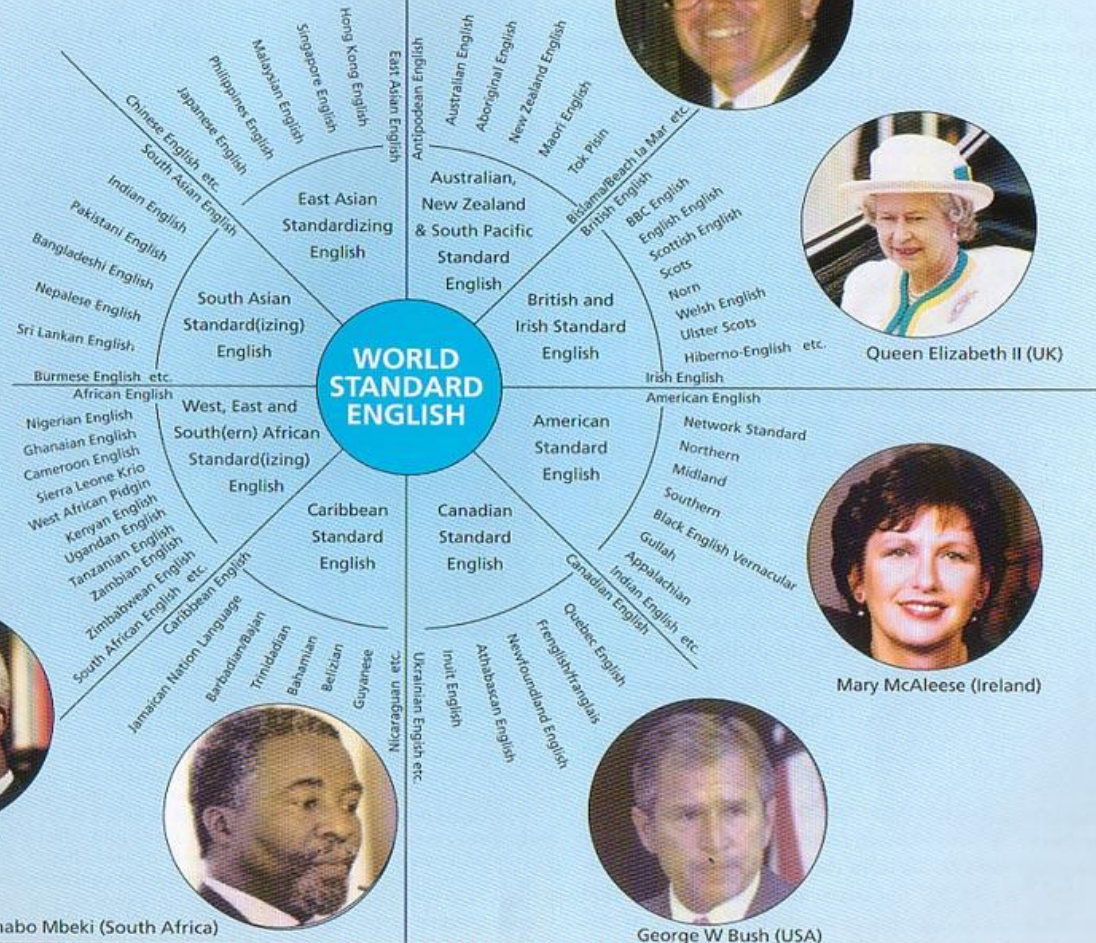
One way of representing the unity and diversity of the English-speaking world (from T. McArthur, 1987). At the centre is placed the notion of World English, conceived as a 'common core'. Around it are placed the various regional or national standards, either established or becoming established ('standardizing'). On the outside are examples of the wide range of popular Englishes which exist. Each boundary line could provoke an argument, as the author acknowledges, but the overall perspective is illuminating. A small selection of heads of state or government in 2002 symbolizes the way Standard English is used worldwide in public roles.



Kofi Annan (UN)



Thabo Mbeki (South Africa)



George W. Bush (USA)



Queen Elizabeth II (UK)



Mary McAleese (Ireland)



## Language Change



Tomorrow, and  
tomorrow, and  
tomorrow; creeps  
in this petty pace  
from day to day,  
until the last syll-  
able of recorded  
time. And all our  
yesterdays have  
lighted fools the  
way to dusty





# Like finding a needle in a haystack

The simile has been used since the first half of the sixteenth century, although its earliest appearance was as 'a needle in a meadow' and then 'a needle in a bottle of hay', 'bottle' being an old word for a 'bundle of hay or straw'.

The 'haystack' dates from the second half of the eighteenth century.



# NEA: Language in Action

- The aim of this area of study is to allow students to explore and analyse language data independently and develop and reflect upon their own writing expertise.
- **Assessment:** Internally assessed coursework
- It requires students to carry out two different kinds of individual research:
  - a language investigation (2,000 words excluding data)
  - a piece of original writing and commentary (750 words each).
- Students can choose to pursue a study of spoken, written or multimodal data, or a mixture of text types, demonstrating knowledge in areas of individual interest.

