



ASSESSMENT and
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ALLIANCE

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GCE

English Language B

Unit ENB6

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Unit 6: Language Development

General principles

The aim of this module is to engage candidates in a detailed examination of the concepts and theories of language acquisition and language change using the knowledge, understanding and skills they have developed over all the AS and A2 Modules (synopticity). Like Unit 2, Unit 6 requires candidates to demonstrate their understanding of the interconnection of specific features of language and their appropriate application to different social contexts. There is an additional demand that these contexts will include texts and data relating to the acquisition of English by children and the growth of and changes in language over time.

In common with all units in this specification, references to research (AO4) relate to the definition published in 2001 by AQA. This definition is as follows and examiners should interpret all references to research in exam questions accordingly:

Research embraces not only published studies encountered in academic sources, but equally the findings of candidates themselves through exploration of their own data in classroom settings and beyond. As a general principle, candidates will be expected to offer appropriate evidence for points they make in their work. The ability to discuss language data and issues in objective and critical ways is at the core of a good candidate performance.

Assessment Objectives

This module requires candidates to:

- AO1 Communicate clearly the knowledge, understanding and insight appropriate to the study of language, using appropriate terminology and accurate and coherent expression (2.5% A2).
- AO3ii Apply and explore frameworks for the systematic study of language at different levels, commenting on the usefulness of approaches taken (5% A2).
- AO4 Understand, discuss and explore concepts and issues relating to language in use (5% A2).
- AO5ii Analyse and evaluate variation in the meanings and forms of spoken and written language from different times according to context (7.5% A2).

The Generic Numerical Mark Scheme and Indicative Content pages that follow specify the criteria and indicators that will guide examiners in judging how satisfactorily candidates have achieved these different objectives.

Examiners should mark scripts holistically but with an awareness of the band they would place the text in for each assessment objective. The final mark should reflect the greater weighting given to the other assessment objectives and especially to AO5ii.

General Numerical Mark Scheme: All questions

Marks	Skills Descriptors	
0-5	AO1	Rudimentary observations about relationships between language and development with particular reference to prescribed topic area; frequent lapses in control of written expression and scarcely any use of terminology.
	AO3ii	Very limited attempt at application of frameworks; generally not reliable and systematic; observations on data confined to one or two references.
	AO4	Comments on a factor governing language use in data, though not fully understood; attempts discussion of concept of language in use in relation to data but with very limited success.
	AO5ii	May refer to one or two factors influencing form, meaning and diversity in data; may refer to one or two contextual factors of data.
6-11	AO1	Some general observations about relationships between language and development with particular reference to prescribed topic area; lapses in control of written expression and little appropriate use of terminology.
	AO3ii	Limited attempt at application of frameworks; generally unreliable and rarely systematic; observations on data confined to isolated references.
	AO4	Elementary comment on one or two factors governing language use in data, though not always fully understood; attempts discussion of concept of language in use in relation to data but with limited success.
	AO5ii	Recognises one or two factors influencing form, meaning and diversity in data; identifies one or two contextual factors of data.
12-17	AO1	Makes observations, not always accurately, and with limited detail on relationships between language and development with particular reference to prescribed topic area; generally accurate written expression and some appropriate use of terminology.
	AO3ii	Attempts some application of frameworks but not always successfully, reliably or systematically; some valid observations on data.
	AO4	Some awareness of a limited number of factors governing language use in data; discusses concept of language in use in relation to data.
	AO5ii	Recognises some features influencing form, meaning and diversity in data; identifies some contextual factors of data .

18-23	<p>AO1 Generally accurate observations about relationships between language and development with particular reference to prescribed topic area; accurate and clear written expression and appropriate use of terminology.</p> <p>AO3ii Application of frameworks to data evident, but some lapses in reliability and lacking in systematic treatment; some valid and sensible observations on data.</p> <p>AO4 Some understanding of a number of factors governing language use in data; discusses concept of language in use in relation to data with some effectiveness.</p> <p>AO5ii Some awareness of contextual factors influencing form, meaning and diversity in data; identifies and interprets a number of contextual factors of data.</p>
24-29	<p>AO1 Clear observations about relationships between language and development with particular reference to prescribed topic area; very controlled written expression and sound use of terminology.</p> <p>AO3ii Generally reliable and systematic application of frameworks to the data; makes generally secure linguistic observations on data.</p> <p>AO4 Sound understanding of factors governing language use in data; often effective discussion of concept of language in use in relation to data.</p> <p>AO5ii Shows awareness of factors influencing form, meaning and diversity in data; generally clear description and interpretation of distinctive contextual factors of data.</p>
30-35	<p>AO1 Clear and detailed observations about relationships between language and development with particular reference to prescribed topic area; exemplary written expression and accurate use of terminology.</p> <p>AO3ii Reliable and systematic application of frameworks to the data; makes informed linguistic observations on data.</p> <p>AO4 Perceptive insight into many factors governing language use in data; effective discussion of concept of language in use in relation to data.</p> <p>AO5ii Shows understanding of factors influencing form, meaning and diversity in data; clear description and interpretation of distinctive contextual factors of data.</p>

Indicative Content

Question 1: Language Acquisition – how Jamie (17 months) is using language in an interaction with a parent focused on an alphabet book.

Assessment Objective 3

Reward precision of observation and relevant application of terms and concepts about the language levels. Stronger responses will include some comment on grammatical and/or pragmatic choices. Credit groupings of examples across the data.

Lexis

Use of morphologically simpler, semantically more accessible vocabulary by J;
Use of protoword (ni) as proxy;
Active and passive vocabulary: J's knowledge of meanings beyond those stated explicitly;
Lexical overextension (e.g. mummy as Queen).

Semantics

Semantic fields from young children's routines and from alphabet book genre;
Relatively explicit reference from P and implicit from J (with exceptions);
P's focus on making meanings more explicit;
Semantic fields of alphabet book (cultural knowledge outside J's immediate experience);
J's capacity to connect book event of violin with mother's action.

Grammar

Morphological complexity (MLU);
Absence of function words;
Mainly but not exclusively one-word utterances;
Sentence types and sentence complexity (e.g. P's questions).
Holophrastic, context-bound grammatical dimensions to language use.

Pragmatics

P's ability to reconstruct J's meanings from verbal cues and contexts;
P's implied assumption of correspondence between the book world and J's experience;
P's implied understanding of J's emerging language – "scaffolding" behaviours;
J's use of implied father's answer ("alright?") in question form to direct response;
J's use of verbs and roles for words not known (implied meanings).

Discourse structure

Book as a joint focus and framework for building shared understanding;
Achievement of cohesive conversation in spite of limiting conditions;
P's control of the interaction with sequencing governed by alphabet book sequence;
J's short turns (e.g. mean length of utterance);
P's behaviours of interpreting, evaluating, clarifying and re-stating J's utterances;
P's role to scaffold and encourage Jamie's speech;

Phonology

Evidence of substitution;
Evidence of reduplication;
Evidence of elision;
Difficulties with consonant clusters and sounds learned later.

Graphology/Gesture

Comments on transcription conventions necessary to make meaning clear to reader who doesn't share the context;
Use of gesture.

Assessment Objective 4

Assessment Objective 4 tests knowledge of ideas, methods and evidence from studies of language in use. In Child Language Acquisition answers this will be evidenced by the theoretical and research frameworks the candidate is able to bring to bear on their analysis. The danger of such knowledge and understanding is that it is sometimes used without regard for the particular question and associated data. Examiners should seek to credit relevant knowledge as it applies to how Jamie is using language and not knowledge for its own sake.

Such relevant knowledge pre-supposes a rich text interpretation. Deficit prescriptive evaluations will allow little relevant purchase on the data. Good candidates should be familiar with the kind of child language metalanguage indicated in the AO3 descriptors (e.g. overextension, mean length of utterance, substitution). They will be familiar with the formal linguistic aspects such as the idea of grammatical stages but will also give recognition to functions and meanings.

Stronger answers in the 24-35 range will be informed by secure knowledge of ideas from language study research. Responses will tend to be more explicit and wide ranging in their coverage, more probing and explicit in their analysis and more cautious in the way in which they draw conclusions on the basis of this evidence (due tentativeness). There may be some preparedness to consider the data and research background critically.

Such answers will show detailed awareness that there are features and patterns of child language at the one word stage which enable the child to achieve more complex social purposes and meanings than are explicit in the language. There will be awareness of the research debates about the importance of interaction, children's use of language for different functions (including Halliday). They will be aware of the importance of more expert users scaffolding interaction. They will have some awareness that the learning of a first language is not just that formal linguistic accomplishment but also a route to enculturation and literacy (in its wider social sense [Street 1981,1997]).

Answers in the 12-24 range will show some of the qualities in the range above but coverage will be less secure and consistent. For example answers may be uneven, oversimplified or over-assertive in their coverage of some important material. Some answers in this range may show an informed but undiscerning and/or inflexible use of secondary research.

Answers in the 0-11 band will include relevant answers which demonstrate no more than weak subject knowledge and understanding, and answers that are more fundamentally flawed.

Deficit accounts of children's language as inferior would suggest little understanding of the descriptive rich text interpretation that informs approaches based on language study principles and which is necessary to make sense of such transcripts.

Irrelevant answers may include those which give general chronological surveys of child development and can only be credited where coverage is appropriate to the question set.

Research coverage

There is an established body of spoken acquisition research used in A Level language study and summarised in many textbooks. Candidates may make reference to a range of references, fieldwork, examples and theorising by linguists such as that found in Brown and Bellugi (1964); Halliday (1978) Wells (1987); and/or research summaries including Meadows (1994), Crystal (1997). The important criterion is to what extent this knowledge provides cognitive tools which inform the relevant analysis of the data in relation to the question set. Following the AQA B research statement, candidates may make references to their own research and this should be credited when used appropriately.

Assessment Objective 5 ii

Contextual awareness is likely to be mixed in with coverage of AO3 and AO4 rather than in separate paragraphs. Contextual awareness will relate to:

1. the situational variation (use variation);
2. the specific contextual factors relating to language development;
3. temporal aspects.

The situational variation aspects relate to adult/children reading rituals including those based around alphabet books; features of parentese used to draw out and extend the dialogue in this conscientiously constructed adult/child exchange. Contextual awareness will also include awareness of children's language and functions at the one-word stage including the distinctions between their active and passive uses of language; the temporal dimension is not a major factor here although the exchange reflects values about parenting approaches and genre features of children's alphabet books which place the text in the late twentieth century.

Performance in AO5ii will be related to how well AO3ii observations are related to context rather than left as feature spotting.

Question 2: Language Acquisition - how children playing show their language development including their interactive skills.

Lexis

Vocabulary choices appropriate to roles;
Cultural allusions (that a deal);
Idiolectal SPOACH (pronunciation feature? Meaning?)

Semantics

Semantic fields from young children's routines and from story/nursery rhyme genres;
Children's words and collocations (going to tell my mummy);
Logic, coherence and cohesion to those not involved;
Vocabulary and collocations indicating emerging implicit awareness of register.

Grammar

General level of sophistication including complex sentences and modals;
Elided words and inflections (especially Keri); ellipsis;
Emerging control of more complex auxiliary constructions;
Use of present continuous for ongoing role-play;
Repeated structures in dispute and competition.
Control of tenses.

Pragmatics

Involved courteous conversation about visit to toilet (taboo and politeness norms);
Use of negatives and directives (respect for face?);
Sense of subtext of competition in disputes (negatives).

Discourse structure

Managing to sustain interaction with little adult involvement;
Conversational range and fluency (register, topic changes, turntaking);
Element of competitiveness (no (.) I show you);
M's non-committal avoidance of K's statement about upstairs toilets (social knowledge);
Taking on of conversational roles (including inconsistencies C 1.1);
Mixed registers: Interleaving of illocutionary statements, role-play, actions and references to people and events outside the role-play (degree of co-operation involved);
Disagreements, their development and management.

Phonology

Raised voice for DOWNSTAIRS and MY and possible inferences to be drawn;
SPOACH could be realisation of "smooch" or "smoke"?
Possible absence of important phonological information in this transcript.

Assessment Objective 4

Assessment Objective 4 tests knowledge of ideas, methods and evidence from studies of language in use. In Child Language Acquisition answers this will be evidenced by the theoretical and research frameworks the candidate is able to bring to bear on their analysis. The danger of such knowledge and understanding is that it is sometimes used without regard for the particular question and associated data. Examiners should seek to credit relevant knowledge as it applies to what the transcripts show about the children's' language development including their interactive skills.

Such relevant knowledge pre-supposes a rich text interpretative framework. Deficit prescriptive evaluations will allow little relevant purchase on the data. Good candidates should be familiar with the kind of child language metalanguage indicated in the AO3 descriptors. They will be familiar with the formal linguistic aspects such as the idea of grammatical stages but will also give recognition to functions, meanings and

social roles. They will show awareness of how much children will have learned about language and interaction in the previous eighteen months (cf question 1).

Stronger answers in the 24-35 range will be informed by secure knowledge of ideas from language study. Responses will tend to be more explicit and wide ranging in their coverage, more probing and explicit in their analysis and more cautious in the way in which they draw conclusions on the basis of this evidence (due tentativeness). There may be some preparedness to consider the data and research background critically.

Such answers will show detailed awareness that the transcript exemplifies many features of children's language that would be expected at this relatively late stage in spoken acquisition. The children are able to achieve complex social purposes and meanings through exploratory play. There are some examples of transitional language structures (overgeneralisations and elisions) but many of the most obvious signs of their state of maturation are social rather than linguistic (taboos, disagreement and management of face). There is much evidence of emerging sophistication in their politeness markers and use of more elaborate grammatical forms (including modals).

There will be awareness of the research debates about the importance of interaction, exploratory talk through play, and children's opportunities for use of language for different functions and audiences.

Answers in the 12-24 range will show some of the qualities in the range above but coverage will be less secure and consistent. For example answers may be uneven, oversimplified or over-assertive in their coverage of some important material. Some answers in this range may show an informed but undiscerning and/or inflexible use of secondary research.

Answers in the 0-11 band will include relevant answers which demonstrate no more than weak subject knowledge and understanding and answers that are more fundamentally flawed.

Deficit accounts of children's language as inferior would suggest little understanding of the descriptive rich text interpretation that informs approaches based on language study principles and which is necessary to make sense of such transcripts.

Irrelevant answers may include those which give general chronological surveys of child development and can only be credited where coverage is appropriate to the question set.

Research coverage

This question tests less familiar specification content than question 1. There are sections on children's play in Crystal's Cambridge Encyclopedia of Language and in his book on play. There are examples of children playing in some popular textbooks including Peccei, Myzor and the LINC materials but commentary is more often focused on formal acquisition than on the development of interactive language skills including pragmatic awareness.

More substantial coverage as found in *Children's Conversation* (McTear 1985) and *A Child's learning of English* (Paul Fletcher 1985) would not normally be available in centres although material such as these transcripts will crop up in ENB4 investigations and class fieldwork.

AO4 coverage will relate to the way that ideas from language study inform the analysis of the data in relation to the question. It is unlikely there will be an extensive use of specialist research references to three year olds playing together. Nor would such references or their absence necessarily indicate the level of performance in this objective.

Assessment Objective 5 ii

Contextual awareness is likely to be mixed in with coverage of AO3 and AO4 rather than in separate paragraphs. Contextual awareness will relate to:

- the situational variation (use variation) including the domestic setting;
- the specific contextual factors relating to language development;
- temporal aspects.

The situational variation aspects relate to children's exploratory play including those based around role-play. Contextual awareness will also include awareness of children's language and functions including their social awareness and emerging expertise; the temporal dimension is not a major factor here.

Performance in AO5ii will be related to how well AO3ii observations are related to context rather than left as feature spotting.

Question 3: Language Change – What do these texts show about the developing conventions of text messaging?

Text E and all texts

Graphology and Orthography

Text messaging spelling conventions including letter/number homophones, initialisms, vowel deletion, phonetic spelling, clippings, reduplication;
Use of capitalisation (technical reasons);
Marking of word boundaries in phrases and collocations (inmind);
Inconsistent punctuation in some messages including use of the apostrophe;
Verbal play (whill, and “dem” for them);
Use of emoticons.

Lexis

General intelligibility of vocabulary;
Colloquial terms (Hi) and use of slang;
Figurative use of language including innuendo;
General pattern of preference for short words with OE origin;
Cultural influences and allusions (London Jamaican/Ali G “dem”).

Semantics

Semantic fields of student recreation, part time work and managing of arrangements;
Metaphor including cliché romantic address;
Degrees of implicitness in reference.

Grammar

Grammar more like that found in informal speech repertoires?
Ellipsis and elision (function words).

Discourse structure

Awareness that sample is not consecutive sequence;
Attempts to identify subgenre – phatic, instrumental, flirtatious functions;
Attempts to identify repeated structures - absence of greetings;
Place of message in longer and wider communication sequences.

Text F Key Word in Context list (KWIC list)

Degree to which kwiclist reflects and deviates from conventions identified in text E;
“ite” as common textstring substitute for awkward traditional spelling “ight”;
nite as a significant leisuretime focus in this sample.

Text F Word Frequency List

Possible index of semantic concerns;
Frequent use of U and compare with standard form;
Only two of the 20 most frequently words are irregular;
2 not shown because it is a number;
difficulty of saying much about this text (other variables).

Text G Newspaper Account

Comparisons and contrasts between items listed here and items used in Text E;
Comparisons and contrasts between types listed here and items used in Text E;
Provenance of research source;
Role of newspapers and media in authorisation of linguistic innovation;
Critical mass of use of text messages and significance of age profile.

Assessment Objective 4

Assessment Objective 4 tests knowledge of ideas, methods and evidence from studies of language in use. In Language Change answers this will be evidenced by the theoretical and research frameworks the candidate is able to bring to bear on their analysis. The danger of such knowledge and understanding is that it is sometimes used without regard for the particular question and associated data. Examiners should seek to credit relevant knowledge as it applies to what these texts show about the emerging conventions of text messaging.

Stronger answers in the 24-25 range will be informed by secure knowledge of ideas from language study. As a result of this they will tend to be more explicit and wide ranging in their coverage, more probing and explicit in their analysis and more cautious in the way in which they draw conclusions on the basis of limited evidence (due tentativeness).

Such answers will show awareness that this is a small but complex data set which raises issues about

- how language actually changes and how it is reported as changing;
- how language conventions are innovated, actuated, diffused and codified;
- how language can change from below the level of explicit awareness;
- how language change can be related to technological change but social factors drive it.

Some weaker answers will give simplified accounts of how technology drives language change. These are likely to be based on speculation and/or uncritical acceptance of received ideas such as those found in text H.

Other weaker answers may be largely based on the candidate's own experiences of text messaging. These may be effective and perceptive but may also limit relevant coverage in relation to AO3 and AO5ii. More generous credit can be given for AO4 knowledge and understanding where relevant to the question.

Research coverage

There is almost no detailed published reference of academic standing on the conventions of text messaging. There are books which include brief examples of new text varieties and there is plentiful accessible reference on how language changes. Stronger answers will work on this data set on its own terms by reference to ideas from language study about how vocabulary, spelling and discourse conventions change.

Such coverage is to be found in Crystal's Encyclopaedias and more specialist books on vocabulary, spelling and language and technological change. There is no particular credit for citing the secondary sources. The important issue is that the candidate's approaches are informed by cognitive tools, classifications and methods based language study methods. Experiences in analysing such data in ENB4 investigations and centre fieldwork may be used as relevant background to the analysis.

Assessment Objective 5ii

Candidates will show awareness that these texts show situational as well as temporal variation.

Situational variation

Origins in student subculture and reflecting those socially and interpersonally oriented preoccupations;

Origins of texts – variation in original purposes and audiences;

Provenance- reliability of sample in Text E;

Computer generated automatic re-representation of language in F and G;

Affordances of text messaging writing – moves writing into new social and geographical spaces;

Absence of dictionaries and authoritative guidance on usage;

Physical context and situational constraint of awkward key pad (text entry).

Temporal variation

Technological context and ICT in late 20th century;

Informalisation and conversationalisation of written modes;

Text messaging conventions still diffusing;

Developed at a time in which covert prestige is diffusing;

Relationship with telegrams and other restricted convention languages;

Relationship with other ICT text types.

Question 4: Language Change – Changes in language and style over time as demonstrated by excerpts from English-German phrasebooks from 1837 and 1993.

There is plentiful exemplification of language change and situational variation details in these three Data Pairings. Relevant AO3ii coverage includes:

Graphology

Different design conventions: one oriented around promotion of knowledge, formality and authoritativeness and the other focused on contemporary mass market considerations;
Different uses of fonts and images (Roman, Gothic and centring in Ia); Sans Serif and pictures in Ib);
Capitalisation of “Dialogues” in Ia)
Bar code, price and logo conventions in Ib) as against title page in Cloth covered Ia);
Slogan footer in Ib);
Lighter punctuation in Ib).
Greater use of graphological devices to signal text structure in Jb): spaceshifting, textboxes, bullet points;
Reference to systematic, colour coded layout of text in B texts;
Differing conventions for laying out translations in third data set.

Lexis: words and phrases

Formal vocabulary choices 1837 Texts, greater use of colloquial language in 1993 (“mini dictionary”, “phrase finder”);
Collocations which now appear quaint (“for the use of”; “have the kindness to be careful in examining”);
Archaic words, phrases and abbreviated forms (“a copious vocabulary”);
Formal address terms and hierarchical social and domestic roles in K a);
Differing specialist terms (e.g. “lodging”, “parlour”, “double-room”).

Semantics

Authoritative tenor and more explicit reference in Ia);
Use of slogan in Ib);
Devices to show translation;
Degrees of explicitness.

Grammar

Lengthy minor sentence across 11 lines in 1a) , short minor sentences in Ib);
Sentence complexity in 1a) ; short minor sentences in Ib);
Use of pronouns for immediacy of address in Ib);
Archaic usage in Kb) – question without auxiliary verb;
Sentence types and exclamatory sentences in Ib);
Authoritative use of modals in A) texts;
Possible indications of English grammar reflecting German patterns (Have you any vacancies in Text Kb);
Complex, Latinate, passive grammatical structures in Text Jb).

Pragmatics

The reader will recognise and identify with designated societal roles: gentleman traveller in Ia) and business/holidaymaker in Ib);
Social assumptions of normal conversational discourse in different social groups and at different times.

Discourse structure

Different Discourse conventions, especially in the Ka) text: Text Ka) is built on the now obsolete model of an imagined dialogue (a more popular convention in the 18th and early 19th centuries);
Non linear text sequencing in boxes and graphologically marked text in b) texts;
Purpose: different strategies used to promote the unique selling point of each book;
Contrasts and comparisons in informational structure.

Phonology

Devices for showing pronunciation in Kb): phonetic spelling and segmentation.

Assessment Objective 4

Stronger answers in the 24-35 range will be informed by secure knowledge of ideas from language study. As a result of this they will tend to be more explicit and wide ranging in their coverage, more probing and explicit in their analysis and more cautious in the way in which they draw conclusions on the basis of limited evidence (due tentativeness).

Such answers will show awareness that there are features and patterns of this text, which exemplify the linguistic and social conventions of texts of phrasebooks from different times. There may be an awareness that the culture of reception will have a bearing on how a text is read and that the earlier phrasebook may now seem unwittingly comical.

Stronger answers will show explicit awareness of this apparent disjunction between similarity and differences in texts of a similar type separated by 150 years and different social contexts of readership. They will position the texts as examples of a particular popular genre rather than seeing them as representative of all English Language in the 1830s and 1990s.

There will be an awareness that the nature of the formal language changes at the level of lexis, semantics and genre expectations is what would be expected given what is known about the broad developments in the English Language over the past 150 years.

Some weaker answers will judge the A texts for their differences to 21st century social mores and this may take the form of sociological treatments of class and gender with limited linguistic focus. Such answers fall down on AO3ii and AO4.

Some weaker answers may give general chronological surveys of 19th and 20th century language or of language change in general without making these relevant to the texts and their contexts. Some weaker answers may make generalised evaluative claims about which text is better; this has only limited relevance.

Research coverage

Stronger answers will place this within a sociolinguistic and sociocultural perspective. Some students will be able to make connections between this text and other texts they have encountered. There may be references to other developments relevant to language change including those in education, economic development and popular culture.

Assessment Objective 5 ii

Candidates should show awareness that the texts, although they share a common purpose and text type, show situational as well as temporal variation. In particular text A is written for a moneyed, socially select audience of “Travellers” and “Private Students” at a time before mass-travel was popular. This social context is reflected in the address terms and formal style.

Situational variation

Contrasts in audience and prevailing social hierarchies;
Contrasts in the conventions and “technologies” for phrasebooks.

Temporal variation

Technological context including relatively unsophisticated print methods;
Informalisation and conversationalisation of written modes in recent years;
Grammatical preoccupations of 18th and 19th century compared with communicative competence model shown in B texts.