English Language

Victorian Certificate of Education **Study Design**

Latoya BARTON
The sunset (detail)
from a series of twenty-four
9.0 x 9.0 cm each, oil on board

Tarkan ERTURK
Visage (detail)
201.0 x 170.0 cm
synthetic polymer paint, on cotton duck

Liana RASCHILLA
Teapot from the *Crazy Alice* set
19.0 x 22.0 x 22.0 cm
earthenware, clear glaze. lustres

Nigel BROWN
Untitled physics (detail)
90.0 x 440.0 x 70.0 cm
composition board, steel, loudspeakers,
CD player, amplifier, glass

Kate WOOLLEY
Sarah (detail)
76.0 x 101.5 cm, oil on canvas

Chris ELLIS
Tranquility (detail)
35.0 x 22.5 cm
gelatin silver photograph

Christian HART
Within without (detail)
digital film, 6 minutes

Kristian LUCAS
Me, myself, I and you (detail)
56.0 x 102.0 cm
oil on canvas

Merryn ALLEN
Japanese illusions (detail)
centre back: 74.0 cm, waist (flat): 42.0 cm
polyester cotton

Ping (Irene VINCENT)
Boxes (detail)
colour photograph

James ATKINS
Light cascades (detail)
three works, 32.0 x 32.0 x 5.0 cm each
glass, flourescent light, metal

Tim JOINER
14 seconds (detail)
digital film, 1.30 minutes

Lucy McNAMARA
Precariously (detail)
156.0 x 61.0 x 61.0 cm
painted wood, oil paint, egg shells, glue, stainless steel wire

Edited by Ruth Learner
Cover designed by Chris Waldron of BrandHouse
Desktop published by Julie Coleman

English Language

Contents

IMPORTANT INFORMATION

Accreditation period

Units 1–4: 2006–2011

The accreditation period commences on 1 January 2006.

Other sources of information

The *VCAA Bulletin* is the only official source of changes to regulations and accredited studies. The *VCAA Bulletin*, including supplements, also regularly includes advice on VCE studies. It is the responsibility of each VCE teacher to refer to each issue of the *VCAA Bulletin*. The *VCAA Bulletin* is sent in hard copy to all VCE providers. It is available on the Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority's website at www.vcaa.vic.edu.au

To assist teachers in assessing school-assessed coursework in Units 3 and 4, the Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority publishes an assessment handbook that includes advice on the assessment tasks and performance descriptors for assessment.

The current year's *VCE and VCAL Administrative Handbook* contains essential information on assessment and other procedures.

VCE providers

Throughout this study design the term 'school' is intended to include both schools and other VCE providers.

Photocopying

VCE schools only may photocopy parts of this study design for use by teachers.

Introduction

RATIONALE

Language is central to human life. Learning about language helps us to understand ourselves and the world in which we live. Language is the cornerstone of social cohesion.

This study aims to combine learning about the nature of language in human thought and communication with learning how to use English more effectively and creatively. It is informed by the discipline of linguistics and integrates a systematic exploration of the nature of the English Language. Students develop skills in the description and analysis of a diverse range of spoken and written English texts.

A knowledge of how language functions helps develop skills useful in any field in which attention is paid explicitly to language, such as communications, communication disorders, speech and reading therapy, pre-school and primary education, foreign language and English teaching. These skills also have a profound impact upon and are central to areas such as psychology, cognitive science, computer science, and philosophy.

AIMS

This study is designed to enable students to:

- develop their knowledge about the nature and functions of language, with English as the exemplar;
- use English effectively and creatively through activities which involve linguistic analysis and critical reflection as key components;
- investigate relationships between structure, function, context and meaning in English texts, and to describe, reflect upon and comment critically on these;
- learn and use a metalanguage—a language for talking about language and language use;
- expand their descriptive, analytical and critical skills in dealing with language data produced in a variety of contexts;
- gain an awareness of convention and creativity in language and the interplay between these two in language use;
- gain an understanding of the process of child language acquisition;

- identify differences observed in English texts from different periods and explore the nature and effects of language change;
- acquire an awareness of distinctive characteristics of English in Australia;
- appreciate the differences in language use, and the principle of appropriateness in spoken and written English;
- develop awareness and understanding of language variation (personal, functional, social and regional);
- reflect critically upon attitudes to language and language use;
- investigate and describe how language constructs and reflects personal, social and cultural understandings, including a sense of identity;
- enhance effective communication;
- increase appreciation and understanding of English texts;
- develop an awareness of the influences of other languages on English.

LANGUAGE DESCRIPTION

Common to the study of English Language is metalanguage, the rich set of distinctions for describing and classifying language and its use, and a range of analytic and descriptive tools for studying language. An understanding of metalanguage enables students to discuss all subsystems of the language system and to use their knowledge of language in a variety of contexts, such as identifying the ways in which writers and speakers adapt language and structure according to their purpose. By developing an understanding of language description, students will be able to extend their competence in speaking and writing English.

The subsystems of language are the essential organising tools with which students become familiar. The subsystems are:

- phonetics and phonology – the study of the sounds of language;
- morphology and lexicology – the study of the structure or forms of words;
- syntax – the study of the rules determining how words are combined into sentences;
- semantics – the study of meaning in language;
- discourse – a connected series of utterances or sentences.

Each area of study focuses on aspects of each of the subsystems. The specific features are listed for each unit under 'The role of the subsytems', and additional metalanguage is listed under the 'key knowledge' for each outcome.

STRUCTURE

The study is made up of four units. Each unit deals with specific content and is designed to enable students to achieve a set of outcomes. Each outcome is described in terms of key knowledge and skills.

ENTRY

There are no prerequisites for entry to Units 1, 2 and 3. Students must undertake Unit 3 prior to undertaking Unit 4. Units 1 to 4 are designed to a standard equivalent to the final two years of secondary education. All VCE studies are benchmarked against comparable national and international curriculum.

DURATION

Each unit involves at least 50 hours of scheduled classroom instruction.

CHANGES TO THE STUDY DESIGN

During its period of accreditation minor changes to the study will be notified in the *VCAA Bulletin*. The *VCAA Bulletin* is the only source of changes to regulations and accredited studies and it is the responsibility of each VCE teacher to monitor changes or advice about VCE studies published in the *VCAA Bulletin*.

MONITORING FOR QUALITY

As part of ongoing monitoring and quality assurance, the Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority will periodically undertake an audit of English Language to ensure the study is being taught and assessed as accredited. The details of the audit procedures and requirements are published annually in the *VCE and VCAL Administrative Handbook*. Schools will be notified during the teaching year of schools and studies to be audited and the required material for submission.

SAFETY

It is the responsibility of the school to ensure that duty of care is exercised in relation to the health and safety of all students undertaking the study.

USE OF INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATIONS TECHNOLOGY

In designing courses for this study teachers should incorporate information and communications technology where appropriate and applicable to the teaching and learning activities. The Advice for Teachers section provides specific examples of how information and communications technology can be used in this study.

KEY COMPETENCIES AND EMPLOYABILITY SKILLS

This study offers a number of opportunities for students to develop key competencies and employability skills. The Advice for Teachers section provides specific examples of how students can demonstrate key competencies during learning activities and assessment tasks.

LEGISLATIVE COMPLIANCE

When collecting and using information, the provisions of privacy and copyright legislation, such as the Victorian *Information Privacy Act 2000* and *Health Records Act 2001*, and the federal *Privacy Act 1988* and *Copyright Act 1968* must be met.

Assessment and reporting

SATISFACTORY COMPLETION

The award of satisfactory completion for a unit is based on a decision that the student has demonstrated achievement of the set of outcomes specified for the unit. This decision will be based on the teacher's assessment of the student's performance on assessment tasks designated for the unit. Designated assessment tasks are provided in the details for each unit. The Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority publishes an assessment handbook that includes advice on the assessment tasks and performance descriptors for assessment for Units 3 and 4.

Teachers must develop courses that provide opportunities for students to demonstrate achievement of outcomes. Examples of learning activities are provided in the Advice for Teachers section.

Schools will report a result for each unit to the Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority as S (Satisfactory) or N (Not Satisfactory).

Completion of a unit will be reported on the Statement of Results issued by the Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority as S (Satisfactory) or N (Not Satisfactory). Schools may report additional information on levels of achievement.

AUTHENTICATION

Work related to the outcomes will be accepted only if the teacher can attest that, to the best of their knowledge, all unacknowledged work is the student's own. Teachers need to refer to the current year's *VCE and VCAL Administrative Handbook* for authentication procedures.

LEVELS OF ACHIEVEMENT

Units 1 and 2

Procedures for the assessment of levels of achievement in Units 1 and 2 are a matter for school decision. Assessment of levels of achievement for these units will not be reported to the Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority. Schools may choose to report levels of achievement using grades, descriptive statements or other indicators.

Units 3 and 4

The Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority will supervise the assessment of all students undertaking Units 3 and 4.

In English Language the student's level of achievement will be determined by school-assessed coursework and an end-of-year examination. The Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority will report the student's level of performance on each assessment component as a grade from A+ to E or UG (ungraded). To receive a study score, students must achieve two or more graded assessments and receive S for both Units 3 and 4. The study score is reported on a scale of 0–50. It is a measure of how well the student performed in relation to all others who took the study. Teachers should refer to the current year's *VCE and VCAL Administrative Handbook* for details on graded assessment and calculation of the study score. Percentage contributions to the study score in English Language are as follows:

- Unit 3 school-assessed coursework: 25 per cent
- Unit 4 school-assessed coursework: 25 per cent
- End-of-year examination: 50 per cent

Details of the assessment program are described in the sections on Units 3 and 4 in this study design.

Unit 1: Language and communication

The focus of this unit is language and its use in communication. The use of language is an essential aspect of human behaviour, the means by which individuals relate to the world, to each other, and to the community of which they are members. This unit focuses on the nature and functions of language itself and the way language is organised so that it provides its users with the means by which they can make sense of their experience and have contact with others. It enables students to explore the informational and expressive functions of language, the nature of language as a highly elaborate system of signs, the development of language in an individual, and the relationship between speech and writing as the dominant modes of use.

AREA OF STUDY 1

The nature and functions of language

This area of study provides students with an understanding of the nature of language and how language can be used for a variety of functions. It also explores the properties that distinguish human communication as unique.

Language is a primary means of creative expression for individuals and groups. It is a highly elaborate system of signs and conventions that is used for communication and to support and guide thought. Each word of a language is a sign – a sequence of sounds, letters or gestures – that is related by convention to a particular meaning and is re-enforced by frequency of use. This area of study examines the relation of meaning and sign, as exemplified by the arbitrary nature of language, sound symbolism and onomatopoeia.

At the most basic level, all language uses a mode including speech sounds, graphic symbols such as letters, or gestures, as in the case of sign languages and non-verbal communication. These different modes of language are often combined with other systems of communication. For example, a ritual may combine words, images and actions. In this area of study, differences between the modes of spoken and written language are examined.

Students will develop an understanding of the complexity that underpins the use of language. Underlying every sentence uttered is a highly organised arrangement of layers. Around forty-four distinctive sounds are organised into the syllables that combine to form hundreds of meaningful segments. These segments in turn combine to construct thousands of different words that then combine and recombine into an infinite number of possible sentences and discourses.

Language is never a neutral and transparent means of representing reality. It represents a vast repository of conventional understandings and cultural tradition that both shapes and reflects our view of the world. There are many different languages and there are also many different world views embodied by them.

Outcome 1

On completion of this unit the student should be able to identify and describe primary aspects of the nature and functions of human language.

To achieve this outcome the student will draw on knowledge and related skills outlined in area of study 1.

Key knowledge

This knowledge includes

- the major functions that language serves and the principle of appropriateness;
- the primary modes of language: spoken, signed, written;
- the structure of language, from morphemes to lexemes to phrases and clauses;
- the properties that distinguish human communication as unique;
- the conventional nature of words, as exemplified by the arbitrary nature of language and sound symbolism, such as onomatopoeia;
- the ways in which language encodes social and cultural understandings;
- the features that distinguish speech from writing.

Key skills

These skills include the ability to

- define key linguistic concepts as they relate to the nature and functions of language;
- use key concepts and metalanguage appropriately to describe and analyse language use in an objective and systematic way;
- read and interpret a transcription of a spoken English monologue.

AREA OF STUDY 2

Language acquisition

This area of study focuses on the developmental stages of child language acquisition and what children need to learn as they develop from babyhood to early adolescence. In addition to words and their meanings, children must also master the phonological and grammatical conventions of the language, as well as the appropriate use of these conventions in different social situations.

Humans have an innate capacity to learn and use language; a child can begin to use and acquire language from a very early age. As children acquire language, they can be seen to change their language system gradually in response to the language use of others.

Different theories attempt to explain how children acquire language. Clearly, it is not through imitation of what they hear around them or through explicit instruction by adults. Considerable evidence shows that children are born with some kind of innate 'puzzle-solving' device — the challenge is to determine to what extent this processing mechanism is geared to language only, or is part of general cognitive ability.

Research suggests that there is a window of opportunity during which language must be acquired – the so-called 'critical learning period'. There are case studies which show what happens when a child is deprived of the opportunity to learn a language. If linguistic skills are not attained in their early lives, then these skills will remain deficient.

This area of study also examines the similarities and differences that exist between first- and second-language acquisition. Some children acquire two or even three languages as they grow up and for these children there are many similarities about how they learn the different languages they speak. For others who learn an additional language in school or as an older learner, there are marked differences in the process.

Outcome 2

On completion of this unit the student should be able to analyse what children learn when they acquire language and explain a range of perspectives on how language is acquired.

To achieve this outcome the student will draw on knowledge and related skills outlined in area of study 2.

Key knowledge

This knowledge includes

- the nature and the developmental stages of child language acquisition;
- what children need to acquire as they develop as users of spoken language from babyhood to early adolescence, including language knowledge and the use of language for a range of functions;
- the major theories of child language acquisition;
- commonalities between child first- and second-language acquisition;
- the significance of inference in language understanding;
- speech sound production and the phonetic alphabet;
- over-generalisation, differentiating words in a semantic field;
- plural and past tense inflections, function and content words, and the major sentence types and their communicative function.

Key skills

These skills include the ability to

- define key linguistic concepts as they relate to the acquisition of language;
- use key concepts and metalanguage appropriately to describe and analyse language use in an objective and systematic way;
- read a phonetic transcription of English, using the International Phonetic Alphabet (IPA).

THE ROLE OF THE SUBSYSTEMS IN UNIT 1

Students are expected to use the following metalanguage, which will facilitate the acquisition of the necessary skills and knowledge for the two areas of study in Unit 1:

- phonetics and phonology – the International Phonetic Alphabet (IPA); prosodic features (such as pitch, stress and intonation);
- morphology, lexicology and lexemes – parts of speech (noun, verb, adjective, adverb, preposition, pronoun, auxiliary, conjunction, determiner); function words and content words; morpheme, prefix, suffix, root, inflection, such as past and plural suffixes, and derivation, such as adding 'er' to 'play' to form 'player';

- syntax – phrases and clauses, sentence types (declarative, imperative, interrogative, exclamative); sentence structures (simple, compound and complex sentences, ellipsis, and coordination and subordination);
- semantics – the relation of meaning and sign; inference; semantic fields; over-generalisation; onomatopoeia.

ASSESSMENT

The award of satisfactory completion for a unit is based on a decision that the student has demonstrated achievement of the set of outcomes specified for the unit. This decision will be based on the teacher's assessment of the student's overall performance on assessment tasks designated for the unit.

The key knowledge and skills listed for each outcome should be used as a guide to course design and the development of learning activities. The key knowledge and skills do not constitute a checklist and such an approach is not necessary or desirable for determining the achievement of outcomes. The elements of key knowledge and skills should not be assessed separately.

Assessment tasks must be a part of the regular teaching and learning program and must not unduly add to the workload associated with that program. They must be completed mainly in class and within a limited timeframe. Teachers should select a variety of assessment tasks for their assessment program to reflect the key knowledge and skills being assessed and to provide for different learning styles.

For this unit students are required to demonstrate achievement of two outcomes. As a set these outcomes encompass both areas of study.

Demonstration of achievement of Outcomes 1 and 2 must be based on the student's performance on a selection of assessment tasks. Where teachers allow students to choose between tasks they must ensure that the tasks they set are of comparable scope and demand. Assessment tasks for this unit are:

- a folio;
- an investigative report;
- a test;
- an essay;
- a case study;
- short-answer questions;
- a written or an oral analysis of data;
- an analysis of spoken and/or written text;
- an oral presentation or a datashow.

Unit 2: Language change

The focus of this unit is language change. Languages are dynamic and change is an inevitable and a continual process. Engaging with texts from the past can show us how all subsystems of the language system are affected – phonetics and phonology, morphology and lexicology, syntax, discourse analysis, and semantics, and how English has altered over the centuries and how it continues to evolve today.

This unit explores the concepts of change, especially within Australian English, and aims to give students insight into the what, how and why of these changes. Particular attention is paid to attitudes to language change.

AREA OF STUDY 1

English across time

This area of study introduces the idea of language families, in particular the Indo-European language family, of which English is a member. It examines the origins of English as a Germanic language and traces its development from Old through to Early Modern English, and the establishment of a standard language in the eighteenth century. The development of Australian English is also discussed. The general concept of standardisation and the notion of 'correct English' are examined, emphasising that standard languages do not arise because of any inherent quality, but more as geographical and historical accidents.

English has been changing throughout its lifetime and continues to change today. Changes occur across all subsystems of the language system – phonetics and phonology, morphology and lexicology, syntax, discourse analysis, and semantics. These changes result from different influences, some residing within the language itself, and some resulting from the effects of contact with other languages. Variation in everyday speech is what provides the vehicle for change. Most of the time speakers fail to notice the changes because they are gradual and imperceptible, but over time the changes filter into the written word—and can be more clearly gauged.

Linguistic change is typically viewed as indicative of declining standards. Paradoxically, speakers can be curious about word origins and the stories behind the structures in their language, but are often resistant to changes that occur in their life-time. This resistance is about the social significance of language use. It is the cultual and social setting that influences speakers' opinions about certain words, pronunciation and grammar.

An awareness of linguistic heritage, including the history and origins of English and Australian English, can be a valuable resource for users of the language. It is also revealing of shifting values and attitudes within society.

Outcome 1

On completion of this unit the student should be able to describe the making of English, identify how language change takes place and analyse a range of attitudes to language change.

To achieve this outcome the student will draw on knowledge and related skills outlined in area of study 1.

Key knowledge

This knowledge includes

- the historical development of English from Old English to present-day Australian English;
- the relationship of English to the Indo-European languages;
- codification and the making of Standard English, focusing on the origins of the English spelling system;
- changes in phonetics and phonology, focusing on types of sound changes and symmetry of change, as exemplified by the Great English Vowel Shift;
- changes in morphology and syntax and the process of analogy;
- changes in the lexicon (word addition and word loss), with particular reference to words in Australian English;
- changes in semantics (broadening, narrowing, shift, changing connotations), including the origins of Australian English;
- attitudes to changes in language;
- the relationship between language change and variation.

Key skills

These skills include the ability to

- define key linguistic concepts as they relate to the changing nature of English;
- use key concepts and metalanguage appropriately to describe and analyse language change in an objective and systematic way;
- trace etymologies in appropriate sources, such as the *Oxford English Dictionary*.

AREA OF STUDY 2

Englishes across the globe

This area of study considers the dramatic effects of the process of globalisation, involving the development of mass communication systems, and the spread of worldwide communication networks. This is occurring in the context of internationalisation of products and consumerism, and massive flows of people, including tourists, refugees and migrants. English is playing a crucial role in globalisation.

As English progresses towards world language status, changes to it have been enormous. After a period of increasing uniformity, English itself has once again become very diverse as a result of its spread. It is now used by more people as a second or foreign language than as a first language, and it has many national, ethnic and regional varieties, some of which show the effects of intensive contact with other

languages. The 'global village' effect is apparently retarding this process of diversification only to a limited extent, although varieties used in geographically separated communities are now more likely to be heard and hence more likely to be understood. In addition, many 'pidgin' languages with vocabularies based on English have been formed in situations where such languages were called for, and some of these have acquired native speakers and developed into English-based 'creole' languages.

One effect of the worldwide spread of English and its use as an international language is language loss—the decline and death of many indigenous languages in those places where English has taken root. Even where indigenous languages now appear healthy, the high status of English suggests that their survival is precarious.

Outcome 2

On completion of this unit the student should be able to investigate the effects of the globalisation of English in terms of both conformity and diversity.

To achieve this outcome the student will draw on knowledge and related skills outlined in area of study 2.

Key knowledge
This knowledge includes
- factors in the development of English as a world language;
- some distinctive features of national and regional varieties of English;
- some distinctive features of a pidgin or creole language;
- some distinctive features of New Englishes, such as Singlish and Indian English;
- the decline and death of languages as a result of the worldwide spread of English, especially Australian Aboriginal languages.

Key skills
These skills include the ability to
- define key linguistic concepts as they relate to the development of English as a world language;
- use key concepts and metalanguage appropriately to identify, describe and analyse the different varieties that have developed as a result of the spread of English;
- summarise the advantages and disadvantages of globalisation for the world's languages;
- describe the relationship between English and a number of other languages.

THE ROLE OF THE SUBSYSTEMS IN UNIT 2

Students are expected to use the following metalanguage, which will facilitate the acquisition of the necessary skills and knowledge for the two areas of study in Unit 2:
- phonetics and phonology – the International Phonetic Alphabet (IPA); prosodic features (such as pitch, stress and intonation);
- morphology and lexicology – parts of speech (noun, verb, adjective, adverb, preposition, pronoun, auxiliary, conjunction, determiner); function words and content words; morpheme, prefix, suffix, root, inflection, such as past and plural suffixes, and derivation, such as 'er' added to 'play' to form 'player';

- syntax – phrases and clauses, sentence types (declarative, imperative, interrogative, exclamative); sentence structures (simple, compound and complex sentences, ellipsis, and coordination and subordination);
- semantics – connotation and denotation, etymology.

ASSESSMENT

The award of satisfactory completion for a unit is based on a decision that the student has demonstrated achievement of the set of outcomes specified for the unit. This decision will be based on the teacher's assessment of the student's overall performance on assessment tasks designated for the unit.

The key knowledge and skills listed for each outcome should be used as a guide to course design and the development of learning activities. The key knowledge and skills do not constitute a checklist and such an approach is not necessary or desirable for determining the achievement of outcomes. The elements of key knowledge and skills should not be assessed separately.

Assessment tasks must be a part of the regular teaching and learning program and must not unduly add to the workload associated with that program. They must be completed mainly in class and within a limited timeframe. Teachers should select a variety of assessment tasks for their assessment program to reflect the key knowledge and skills being assessed and to provide for different learning styles.

For this unit students are required to demonstrate achievement of two outcomes. As a set these outcomes encompass both areas of study.

Demonstration of achievement of Outcomes 1 and 2 must be based on the student's performance on a selection of assessment tasks. Where teachers allow students to choose between tasks they must ensure that the tasks they set are of comparable scope and demand. Assessment tasks for this unit are:

- a folio;
- an investigative report;
- a test;
- an essay;
- a case study;
- short-answer questions;
- a written or an oral analysis of data;
- an analysis of a spoken and/or written text;
- an oral presentation or a datashow.

Unit 3: Language in society

The focus of this unit is language in its social setting. Through language we communicate information, ideas, attitudes, prejudices and ideological stances.

Language varies according to both the user and its occasion of use. There is a range of attitudes within society to the different varieties of language we use.

Language is a means of societal interaction. It is indicative of power structures both through the choice of a particular variety of language, and through the way in which that language variety is used in processes of inclusion and exclusion.

Language is a means of identifying and defining individual and group membership. Through it we indicate how we want others to perceive us. Language marks group boundaries, as it is used to distinguish between 'us' and 'them'.

AREA OF STUDY 1

Language variation according to users

This area of study gives students an understanding of the different user related varieties of English, particularly as they relate to Standard English. This sort of variation is influenced by both geography and society. At any given point in time, language will differ both between countries and within the same country. Any socially significant group of people will also differ in their linguistic behaviour which may be influenced by factors such as age, gender, sexual orientation, socio-economic class, and education of speakers. There is also personal variation – all of us are marked out as individuals by our unique linguistic behaviour.

Countries like Australia are not linguistically uniform. This area of study examines regional accents and dialects and questions to do with language and social identity (as reflected in class, status, group solidarity and social distance). It focuses especially on the importance of language in the formation and development of individual, group and national identity in contemporary Australia.

Ethnicity is a crucial part of social identity and is something that people want to demonstrate through their use of language. Accordingly, different ethnic varieties of dominant languages such as English can become important markers of ethnic group membership. For example, even though Standard Australian English has incorporated very little from Aboriginal languages, varieties of Aboriginal English are providing an interesting dimension to English in Australia. Other ethnically defined varieties (ethnolects) come from the large numbers of migrants, in particular those from non-English speaking backgrounds. These speakers have enhanced the overall variation by retaining, for example, aspects of their first language when speaking English.

This area of study also explores attitudes to variation. Despite contemporary aspirations of equal opportunity and equality for all, language continues to function as a social disadvantage for people. Many people in different language communities are still discriminated against, both wittingly and unwittingly, for using non-standard dialects and low-status accents. These judgments are not linguistic, but have deep social underpinnings and arise from personal associations and prejudices of individual speakers.

Outcome 1

On completion of this unit the student should be able to analyse a range of attitudes to language varieties, and how language variation reflects its users and contributes to a sense of identity.

To achieve this outcome the student will draw on knowledge and related skills outlined in area of study 1.

Key knowledge

This knowledge includes

- user-related language variation, including regional, social, cultural, and personal varieties;
- the concept of a 'standard language' and the role of Standard English in society;
- the range of language varieties in Australia, including Aboriginal English and other ethnolects;
- some of the distinctive characteristics of Australian English in contrast to some other national varieties, for example in phonological, lexical, prosodic, and grammatical patterns;
- features of Broad, General and Cultivated Australian English;
- attitudes within society to different varieties of language;
- the role of language in individual, group and national identity.

Key skills

These skills include the ability to

- define key linguistic concepts as they relate to language variation and identity, and the attitudes to variation;
- use key concepts and metalanguage appropriately to describe and analyse how language reflects and shapes the identities of users;
- explain and analyse how identity is expressed in a text.

AREA OF STUDY 2

Language variation according to use

This area of study focuses on the way speakers alter language to suit the occasions in which it is used. Language varies constantly in response to a range of different situational factors; if any one factor is changed, the language used changes accordingly. These factors include the relationship between speakers and their audience and the influences of setting and subject matter. Important here also is the concept of politeness and the role of politeness markers.

All speakers have a range of linguistic repertoires that allow them to play different roles within the speech communities. These roles can involve a variety of occupations, including professions, hobbies and sports. Of particular importance are the general concepts of slang and jargon as they relate to social identity (solidarity and social distance). These varieties identify activities, events, and objects that have become routine for those involved and have a crucial function in creating rapport in the work or play environment.

This area of study also focuses on concepts such as euphemism, taboo and double-speak and their use with respect to changing social expectations and political correctness. It also looks at the ways in which language can be used for discrimination and manipulation. Contemporary English-speaking societies have evolved new taboos for language related to gender, sexuality, disability, race and ethnicity. Vocabulary that could be interpreted as discriminatory or pejorative is now used carefully or avoided altogether. The push for equality and equal opportunity has given rise to legally enforceable fairness, sensitivity and tolerance. Sanctions have evolved against what might be dubbed '-IST' language (such as sexist and racist language), while there has been relaxation of laws against profanity, blasphemy and (sexual) obscenity.

Outcome 2

On completion of this unit the student should be able to identify the ways in which language features are used in societal interaction and analyse variations in language use.

To achieve this outcome the student will draw on knowledge and related skills outlined in area of study 2.

Key knowledge

This knowledge includes

- language variation in situations of use, including the principle of appropriateness;
- jargon and slang and their use for group membership;
- aspects of the use of politeness in creating social distance;
- taboo, euphemism, double-speak and their use with respect to changing social expectations and political correctness;
- ways in which language can be used for discrimination and manipulation and the major principles of non-discriminatory language;
- the relationship between language use and societal interaction.

Key skills

These skills include the ability to

- define key linguistic concepts of language features used in societal interaction;
- use key concepts and metalanguage appropriately to describe and analyse language variation and use in Australia in an objective and systematic way;
- describe how language choice is influenced by context and purpose.

THE ROLE OF THE SUBSYSTEMS IN UNIT 3

Students are expected to use the following metalanguage, which will facilitate the acquisition of the necessary skills and knowledge for the two areas of study in Unit 3:

- phonetics and phonology – the International Phonetic Alphabet (IPA) and the phonetic transcription of English, prosodic features (pitch, stress, and intonation); sounds in connected speech; Broad, General and Cultivated accents in Australian English;
- morphology and lexicology – parts of speech (noun, verb, adjective, adverb, preposition, pronoun, auxiliary, conjunction, determiner), function words and content words; suffixation (such as 'journo', 'brekky', 'mozzie');

- syntax – phrases and clauses, and sentences, the basic functions in clause structure (subject, object, complement, adverbial); different sentence types (declarative, imperative, interrogative, exclamative); various aspects of sentence structure;
- semantics – lexical meaning and semantic fields; connotation and denotation.

ASSESSMENT

The award of satisfactory completion for a unit is based on a decision that the student has demonstrated achievement of the set of outcomes specified for the unit. This decision will be based on the teacher's assessment of the student's overall performance on assessment tasks designated for the unit. The Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority publishes an assessment handbook that includes advice on the assessment tasks and performance descriptors for assessment.

The key knowledge and skills listed for each outcome should be used as a guide to course design and the development of learning activities. The key knowledge and skills do not constitute a checklist and such an approach is not necessary or desirable for determining the achievement of outcomes. The elements of key knowledge and skills should not be assessed separately.

Assessment of levels of achievement

The student's level of achievement in Unit 3 will be determined by school-assessed coursework and an end-of-year examination.

Contribution to final assessment

School-assessed coursework for Unit 3 will contribute 25 per cent to the study score.

The level of achievement for Units 3 and 4 is also assessed by an end-of-year examination, which will contribute 50 per cent to the study score.

School-assessed coursework

Teachers will provide to the Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority a score representing an assessment of the student's level of achievement.

The score must be based on the teacher's rating of performance of each student on the tasks set out in the following table and in accordance with an assessment handbook published by the Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority. The assessment handbook also includes advice on the assessment tasks and performance descriptors for assessment.

Assessment tasks must be a part of the regular teaching and learning program and must not unduly add to the workload associated with that program. They must be completed mainly in class and within a limited timeframe. Where optional assessment tasks are used, teachers must ensure that they are comparable in scope and demand. Teachers should select a variety of assessment tasks for their program to reflect the key knowledge and skills being assessed and to provide for different learning styles.

Outcomes	Marks allocated*	Assessment tasks
Outcome 1 Analyse a range of attitudes to language varieties, and how language variation reflects its users and contributes to a sense of identity.	50	For each outcome, any one or a combination of the following formats: • a written report of an investigation • a folio • a test
Outcome 2 Identify the ways in which language features are used in societal interaction and analyse variations in language use.	50	• a multimedia report • an essay • an oral presentation.
Total marks	**100**	

*School-assessed coursework for Unit 3 contributes 25 per cent to the study score.

Unit 4: Texts in their Australian contexts

The focus of this unit is texts in their contexts. Language is always encountered as text and it is in the large range of texts that much of the meaning of a culture, its values, knowledge and ideologies, are constructed. This unit provides a framework for the study of texts by looking at various dimensions of style: the grammatical and discourse structure of language; the choice and meanings of words within texts; how words are combined to convey a message; the purpose in conveying a message; and the particular context in which a message is conveyed. The aim is to describe the interrelationship between words, sentences and text to discover how they construct their message.

The texts of a language typically occur in a range of conventional text types or genres, each with its recognisable purpose and conventions. Texts may be spoken, written or signed. Some texts, such as a novel, may have single authors and are created for another or others to interpret. Others, such as a conversation or chat via the Internet, are jointly created and jointly interpreted. Texts do not exist in a vacuum; they are created to be interpreted in a particular context.

By considering the stylistic features used in spoken and written varieties of English, students can gain insight into the effect the speaker or writer is trying to achieve, why the speaker or writer has chosen particular stylistic features, and how the speaker or writer uses language to influence their respective audiences.

AREA OF STUDY 1

Spoken language

This area of study focuses on what is distinctive about speech. Very obviously, humans produce speech orally and receive it by the ear. Speech is typically a social activity; moreover it's often exchanged face-to-face. Speakers also have at their disposal a support system of oral and visual cues that they can use to organise and present information. This includes prosodic features such as intonation, pitch, rhythm, loudness, tempo, pausing, voice quality, as well as paralinguistic features like facial expressions, body gestures and eye gaze.

These obvious formal differences between speech and writing trigger a number of structural differences. These include 'non-fluency' features (speakers make all sorts of repairs and repetitions along the way); discourse particles (spoken interaction is much more personal than writing, and speakers continually refer to themselves and to their audience with these special expressions); ellipsis (speakers can point to things directly or can just leave them out if they are already obvious from the situation); and

characteristics to do with syntactic complexity (long loosely connected structures are the norm in speech) and the presentation of information (speakers can manipulate word order to a much greater extent than writers).

This area of study pays particular attention to speech that involves two or more people. Chatting is one of the most pervasive of all human activities — everyday conversations form the very basis of interpersonal interaction. It is important therefore to understand the ground rules for conversation, especially the strategies that help to ensure interaction runs freely and without obstacles. For talk to be successful, it must be sequenced, coherent, and opened and closed effectively. Successful conversation is facilitated when the speakers involved follow the principle of co-operation.

Outcome 1

On completion of this unit the student should be able to identify and analyse distinctive features of spoken English texts involving more than one speaker.

To achieve this outcome the student will draw on knowledge and related skills outlined in area of study 1.

Key knowledge

This knowledge includes

*   differences in the nature and functions of spoken and written language;
*   the range of different kinds of spoken English, including spontaneous and scripted; monologues and dialogues; spoken narratives, speeches, conversations (face-to-face or telephone), interviews and unscripted commentary on television or radio;
*   some of the features of spoken texts, such as pauses, false starts, repetition, openings and closings, adjacency pairs, overlapping speech, interrogative tags, and discourse particles;
*   some of the major conversational strategies, including topic management, turn-taking, holding the floor, minimal responses;
*   how dialogues reflect relationships between participants in spoken interaction;
*   the co-operative principles of conversation, including maxims of quantity, quality, relevance, manner;
*   conventions for the transcription of spoken English texts.

Key skills

These skills include the ability to

*   define key linguistic concepts as they relate to spoken English;
*   use key concepts and metalanguage appropriately to describe and analyse spoken language use in an objective and systematic way;
*   read and analyse transcribed spoken English text involving more than one speaker.

AREA OF STUDY 2

Written language

Written language is an extremely broad and multifaceted notion. Written genres range from formal examples, such as a piece of academic prose or an official document, to those casual varieties that fall much closer to speech, such as a scribbled note to a friend or an email. Moreover, there are some examples of spoken language, such as you might find in a well-planned lecture for example, that have

many of the organisational features of written language. These various types of writing and speech show differing degrees of planning and formality. The labels 'writing' and 'speech' imply two polar extremes, but in reality there are many intermediate varieties, exhibiting features of both types of discourse to a greater or lesser extent. In electronic chat groups, for instance, people exchange written messages in much the same way as they would chatting face-to-face.

This area of study focuses on how writers provide the right sort of cues to help their audience interpret a text appropriately; in short, how they go about packaging their messages. Compared to speech, writing is a much more solitary activity. Writers often don't know who their readers will be and they don't have the benefit of instant feedback. Not surprisingly writing doesn't tolerate the sort of ambiguity, vagueness and missing information that occurs in speech. It also lacks the elements of body language like gesture, eye contact and the prosodic cues of speech like the variations in pitch, stress and intonation. Features of punctuation and spelling go some way to capturing the special meanings conveyed by these non-verbal signals, but they are limited. The use of inverted commas, for example, or capital letters can show that a word has a special sense, or can express something of the intonation and emphasis of spoken language.

Outcome 2

On completion of this unit the student should be able to identify and analyse distinctive features of written English texts.

To achieve this outcome the student will draw on knowledge and related skills outlined in area of study 2.

Key knowledge

This knowledge includes

- the nature and functions of written English;
- a range of formal and informal written texts drawn from such sources as literature, advertising, bureaucracy, the media, email and electronic chat rooms;
- some of the discourse features exemplified in written texts, including lexical cohesion, information flow, inference in creating coherence;
- the role of discourse features and lexical choice in creating textual cohesion and coherence;
- a range of stylistic features in written texts, including:
  - phonological patterning (alliteration, assonance, consonance, onomatopoeia, rhythm, rhyme)
  - syntactic patterning (antithesis, listing, parallelism)
  - morphological patterning (conversion of word class, creative word formation)
  - lexical choice and semantic patterning (irony, metaphor, oxymoron, simile, personification or animation, puns, lexical ambiguity);
- the relationship between the context and the features of language in a written text.

Key skills

These skills include the ability to

- define key linguistic concepts as they relate to written English;
- use key concepts and metalanguage appropriately to describe and analyse written language in an objective and systematic way;
- identify and analyse a range of discourse and stylistic features in written texts.

THE ROLE OF THE SUBSYSTEMS IN UNIT 4

Students are expected to use the following metalanguage, which will facilitate the acquisition of the necessary skills and knowledge for the two areas of study in Unit 4:

- phonetics and phonology – prosodics of speech, patterning in written texts, connected speech processes;
- morphology and lexicology – morpheme, prefix, suffix, affix, root, derivation and inflection, particularly past tense and plural, collocations and idioms;
- syntax – sentence structure (simple, compound and complex sentences, ellipsis, nominalisation, coordination and subordination); sentence types (declarative, interrogative, imperative, exclamative);
- discourse analysis – lexical cohesion (anaphoric and cataphoric references, deictics), information flow (end-focus, front-focus, passive), pauses, false starts, repetition, self-corrections, and the transcription of spoken English;
- semantics – lexical meaning, especially sense relations (synonymy, antonymy), metaphor denotation and connotation, lexical ambiguity, coherence, inference.

ASSESSMENT

The award of satisfactory completion for a unit is based on a decision that the student has demonstrated achievement of the set of outcomes specified for the unit. This decision will be based on the teacher's assessment of the student's overall performance on assessment tasks designated for the unit. The Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority publishes an assessment handbook that includes advice on the assessment tasks and performance descriptors for assessment.

The key knowledge and skills listed for each outcome should be used as a guide to course design and the development of learning activities. The key knowledge and skills do not constitute a checklist and such an approach is not necessary or desirable for determining the achievement of outcomes. The elements of key knowledge and skills should not be assessed separately.

Assessment of levels of achievement

The student's level of achievement for Unit 4 will be determined by school-assessed coursework and an end-of-year examination.

Contribution to final assessment

School-assessed coursework for Unit 4 will contribute 25 per cent to the study score.

The level of achievement for Units 3 and 4 is also assessed by an end-of-year examination, which will contribute 50 per cent to the study score.

School-assessed coursework

Teachers will provide to the Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority a score representing an assessment of the student's level of achievement.

The score must be based on the teacher's rating of performance of each student on the tasks set out in the following table and in accordance with an assessment handbook published by the Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority. The assessment handbook also includes advice on the assessment tasks and performance descriptors for assessment.

Assessment tasks must be a part of the regular teaching and learning program and must not unduly add to the workload associated with that program. They must be completed mainly in class and within a limited timeframe. Where optional assessment tasks are used, teachers must ensure that they are comparable in scope and demand. Teachers should select a variety of assessment tasks for their program to reflect the key knowledge and skills being assessed and to provide for different learning styles.

Outcomes	Marks allocated*	Assessment tasks
Outcome 1 Identify and analyse distinctive features of spoken English texts involving more than one speaker.	50	An analysis of one or more samples of spoken English texts involving more than one speaker in any one or a combination of the following formats: • an essay • a short-answer test • a written report.
Outcome 2 Identify and analyse distinctive features of written English texts.	50	An analysis of one or more samples of written English texts in any one or a combination of the following formats: • an essay • a short-answer test • a written report.
Total marks	**100**	

*School-assessed coursework for Unit 4 contributes 25 per cent to the study score.

End-of-year examination
Description

The examination will be set by a panel appointed by the Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority. All areas of study and outcomes in Units 3 and 4 are examinable.

Conditions

The examination will be completed under the following conditions:

- Duration: two hours.
- Date: end-of-year, on a date to be published annually by the Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority.
- Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority examination rules will apply. Details of these rules are published annually in the *VCE and VCAL Administrative Handbook.*
- The examination will be marked by a panel appointed by the Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority.

Contribution to final assessment

The examination will contribute 50 per cent to the study score.

Advice for teachers

DEVELOPING A COURSE

A course outlines the nature and sequence of teaching and learning necessary for students to demonstrate achievement of the set of outcomes for a unit. The areas of study broadly describe the learning context and the knowledge required for the demonstration of each outcome. Outcomes are introduced by summary statements and are followed by the key knowledge and skills which relate to the outcomes.

Teachers must develop courses that include appropriate learning activities to enable students to develop the knowledge and skills identified in the outcome statements in each unit.

For Units 1 and 2, teachers must select assessment tasks from the list provided. Tasks should provide a variety and the mix of tasks should reflect the fact that different types of tasks suit different knowledge and skills and different learning styles. Tasks do not have to be lengthy to make a decision about student demonstration of achievement of an outcome.

In Units 3 and 4, assessment is more structured. For some outcomes, or aspects of an outcome, the assessment tasks are prescribed. The contribution that each outcome makes to the total score for school-assessed coursework is also stipulated.

There is no requirement to follow the outcomes in the order in which they appear in the study design. You may, for example, cover Outcome 2 in Unit 3 before Outcome 1. Note that there is the option to use more than one assessment task for each outcome in all units.

USE OF INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATIONS TECHNOLOGY

In designing courses and developing learning activities for English Language, teachers should make use of applications of information and communications technology and new learning technologies, such as computer-based learning, multimedia and the World Wide Web, where appropriate and applicable to teaching and learning activities.

KEY COMPETENCIES AND EMPLOYABILITY SKILLS

Students undertaking the following types of assessment, in addition to demonstrating their understanding and mastery of the content of the study, typically demonstrate the following key competencies and employability skills.

Assessment task	Key competencies and employability skills
Folio	Planning and organisation, organising and managing resources, (written) communication, problem solving, initiative and enterprise, self management
Essay	Planning and organisation, (written) communication
Written report	Planning and organisation, (written) communication
Multimedia report	Use of information and communications technology, self management, planning and organisation, initiative and enterprise (teamwork)
Test	Problem-solving, (written) communication

In completing work for this study, students may also demonstrate other key competencies and employability skills, such as working with others and in teams.

LEARNING ACTIVITIES

Examples of learning activities for each unit are provided in the following sections. Examples highlighted by a shaded box are explained in detail in accompanying boxes. The examples that make use of information and communications technology are identified by this icon **ICT**.

Unit 1: Language and communication

AREA OF STUDY 1: The nature and functions of language

Outcome 1	***Examples of learning activities***
Identify and describe primary aspects of the nature and functions of human language.	draw up a table with a range of utterances and written statements down the left-hand column; identify the purpose of each utterance, whether spoken or written, the context in which each would occur, whether there is an equivalent for each one in the other mode

search the Internet for examples of complaints or observations about language use; newspaper sites are a good starting point; explain how these examples illustrate the principle of appropriateness operating in modern society

read the scene in *Alice in Wonderland* where Alice talks to the Caterpillar; note what happens when the normal rules of communication are not observed, such as the way in which word meanings are changed at the whim of the Caterpillar

investigate the many grammar sites on the web; complete the grammar exercises, e.g. at www.ucl.ac.uk/internet-grammar or www.funbrain.com (The Grammar Gorrillas) or www.library.trinity.wa.edu.au

compare a sample of an email with a sample of ordinary written text on the same topic, e.g. an invitation to a party; what are the similarities/differences between the two samples?

invite a guest speaker on Auslan to the class; ask that person to demonstrate how signing is done and to discuss issues such as: how children learn Auslan; 'baby talk' versions of Auslan; grammar rules in Auslan

print out a section of an Internet chatroom conversation; note whether the features are more like spoken language or written language; provide evidence, especially lexical and grammatical, to support the analysis

make notes as a text is read aloud several times, and get down as many of the words in the text as possible; form groups and combine words to expand the text; where possible, fill in the missing words; listen to the text one more time and identify which words were easiest to guess, which words were not; discuss why and classify the words into function and content words

using three short sample texts, taken from any source, break down the words into the various word classes; arrange the words in a table or list or mind map

make a list of as many prefixes (morphemes) as possible; identify the meaning of each prefix; list three words for each prefix; does the word have meaning without the prefix?

use the Internet to investigate examples of animals that have been taught to communicate like humans, e.g. Koko, Washoe

write a report in which some of the significant differences between animal and human language are outlined, giving supporting evidence for each

go to a website such as www.georgetown.edu/faculty/ballc/animals/animals.html and investigate how animal noises are represented in at least five different languages

invent two role-plays for two people in which an intended message is disguised, but the meaning is clear, e.g. a parent who wants a teenager to do some homework rather than watching TV; how are the messages conveyed? what do the participants need to understand about the underlying meanings in the interaction? what would an 'outsider' make of the interaction?

locate a passage in a novel that describes the appearance and characteristics of a character; make a recording of someone describing themselves or someone else and transcribe the spoken version; compare the two, identifying the different features of spoken and written versions

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Detailed example

CLASSIFYING LANGUAGE UTTERANCES ACCORDING TO MODE AND FUNCTION

Create a chart with 10 rows down and 4 columns across.

Utterance	Mode	Context	Alternative mode
Are you coming with me?	spoken	driver of the car to a friend when leaving a party	no
Thank you for your enquiry	written	a letter or email reply to a request, e.g. from a customer	no
Please hold and a customer serivce operator will be with you shortly	spoken	recorded message on the telephone	no
I'd like to thank you very much for your support	written	thank-you card to an acquaintance	yes, e.g. a speech to supporters at an election

Add examples of your own and discuss how mode and context influence the nature of the language used.

AREA OF STUDY 2: Language acquisition

Outcome 2	***Examples of learning activities***
Analyse what children learn when they acquire language and explain a range of perspectives on how language is acquired.	using computer technology, draw an illustrated timeline showing the stages of language acquisition in children
	transcribe samples of language used by children; identify the stage of language development of children; provide lexical and grammatical evidence
	conduct a survey amongst parents and students of baby words that are particular to individual families; classify the words according to phonological development, identifying purpose and instances of over generalisation
	write an item for a pamphlet on parenting in which the arguments for or against the use of baby talk are discussed; why is baby talk used by adults with infants? what effect does this have on a child's language development? is baby talk a good thing or a bad thing?
	present a PowerPoint talk on the various theories of child language acquisition; decide on an audience and purpose for the presentation before beginning, and tailor the language of the presentation accordingly
	conduct a panel interview in which students play the role of various proponents of language acquisition theories; each 'theorist' presents a summary of their theory and then takes questions from the audience
	watch the film and/or read the story about Helen Keller; explain how her story demonstrates the 'critical period' theory of language acquisition
	do an Internet search of case studies of children who have been deprived of the opportunity to learn language in the critical years; a starting point could be http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Feral_children
	interview a person who has acquired two languages during childhood; find out when they use each language – in what contexts, for what purposes, with whom? write a report on the language use of a bilingual person living in Australian society; decide on a purpose, audience and context for the report
	online, research the benefits of language immersion programs for school-age children; what are the benefits of immersion programs as claimed by their proponents?
	construct a crossword puzzle using the International Phonetic Alphabet (IPA) 'spelling' rather than traditional spelling
	create a scavenger hunt/trail using clues written in IPA

Detailed example

INVESTIGATING THE STAGES OF CHILDREN'S LANGUAGE DEVELOPMENT

Read the following examples of a child's utterances:

			Classify each set into the appropriate stage of language development.
All dry.	All messy.	All wet.	
More cereal.	More hot.		Explain the function of each utterance.
No more.	Mummy gone.		
Airplane all gone.	Byebye car.		

Unit 2: Language change

AREA OF STUDY 1: English across time

Outcome 1

Describe the making of English, identify how language change takes place and analyse a range of attitudes to language change.

Examples of learning activities

develop a timeline which shows the major periods in the development of English, from Old English through to present-day Australian English

in groups, research a major period in the development of English and provide examples of language change; present findings to the class in the form of a PowerPoint presentation

make a poster showing the relationship of English to the Indo-European languages

trace the etymologies of particular words, using the *Oxford English Dictionary*, and pay attention to spelling changes over time

identify and comment on some of the processes in the codification of Standard English

research words and phrases which are unique to Australian English and trace their origins in the *Macquarie Dictionary*

investigate some of the recent political, cultural and social movements which have had an impact on language use in Australia

examine texts from different periods of the English language and look at changes in spelling, pronunciation, vocabulary and grammar; such changes could be presented in a tabular format

compare earlier versions of Australian newspapers (such as *The Argus*) with current newspapers and identify areas of language change

using extracts from medieval texts such as Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales*, identify words which no longer exist or which have undergone semantic change; with the help of a dictionary, give a detailed account of their etymology

using current media, such as news radio and daily newspapers, locate examples of the latest 'buzzwords' or recent additions to Australian English

devise a questionnaire on attitudes to current language trends in Australian English and analyse responses from a range of age groups

describe the concept of symmetry of sound change using examples from the Great English Vowel Shift

collect articles/letters to the editor concerning language change, identify the language subsystems being discussed and then analyse people's attitudes to these changes

collect unusual examples of Australian slang (use an Australian Slang dictionary or website); get your classmates to guess the meanings of these words/expressions and discuss whether these expressions are still common today, and if not, why they have gone out of fashion

try reading a medieval text out loud with an authentic pronunciation

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Detailed example

INVESTIGATING ATTITUDES TO LANGUAGE CHANGE

Find two or three interesting examples of modern Australian English words or phrases; these could be imported from foreign sources such as American English or they may have arisen from current political, cultural or social events.

Devise a survey to establish people's attitudes towards these modern words/phrases. Questions to ask could include:

• How do you feel about these new expressions?

• Do you think they will have a long life-span?

• What do you think about language change in general?

• Do you see any new patterns emerging at present?

• Can you think of any words or phrases which have gone out of fashion in your lifetime?

• What do you predict for the future of Australian English?

• Are you happy with the direction Australian English is taking?

Survey a range of people – they should be a mix of ages and could be parents, teachers, students and friends. Present the answers to the survey questions in a legible form; a table could be used for this.

Analyse your findings. Some points you may like to consider include:

• Are you surprised at the results?

• Did you see any differences in the way adults and young people responded?

• Are there any gender or social background differences?

• Were the respondents aware of language change in their lifetime?

AREA OF STUDY 2: Englishes across the globe

Outcome 2	*Examples of learning activities*
Investigate the effects of the globalisation of English in terms of both conformity and diversity.	investigate the language policy of a bilingual country or a country which has an official language academy; how effective are such policies and what can you surmise about the links between language and national identity?
	using the Internet, locate newspapers from English-speaking countries and try to find differences in the written standard
	investigate the effect of the spread of English on Aboriginal languages
	using a written or oral text, identify some of the distinctive linguistic features of a dialect of Aboriginal English; report findings in a PowerPoint presentation
	discuss as a group some of the factors which contribute to language loss or decline
	investigate the effect of the Internet on the spread and use of English around the globe; is English the dominant 'web' language? or are certain countries using the web as a means of maintaining and promoting their native languages?
	devise a questionnaire to gauge people's attitudes towards pidgin and creole languages
	design a map or poster to illustrate the different types of Englishes present in our world
	locate examples of English words which have become commonplace in foreign languages
	collect examples of unusual 'corruptions' of English which may be found in overseas advertising, product descriptions or tourism
	analyse the impact of globalisation on the world's languages
	rewrite a short text in a pidgin, creole or 'New English' such as Singlish

Detailed example

DISTINCTIVE FEATURES OF A DIALECT

Read an extract from a text or review an extract from a film which illustrates features of Aboriginal English (e.g. *Deadly Unna* a novel by Philip Gwynne, *Beneath Clouds* a film directed by Ivan Sen or the SBS television program *Message Stick*).

Identify the linguistic features that make this dialect distinctive. Look at the following:

- Lexical features: Are there any Aboriginal words which form part of the lexicon? Why do you think this is so?

- Semantics: Are there any English words/phrases which have taken on different meanings in this dialect?

- Syntax and Grammar: Are there any sentence structures or expressions which would be considered 'non-standard'? How may the original Aboriginal language have impacted on the dialect?

- Phonology: Are there any distinctive features in the pronunciation of words?

- How does this dialect compare to Standard English? Where does it lie on the English spectrum? Who uses this dialect? What are some of the attitudes towards it?

Report to the class on your findings, using handouts, overheads or PowerPoint.

Unit 3: Language in society

AREA OF STUDY 1: Language variation according to users

Outcome 1

Analyse a range of attitudes to language varieties, and how language variation reflects its users and contributes to a sense of identity.

Examples of learning activities

record all the different varieties of English you hear over the course of a week; at the end of the week compare your findings in small groups; as a whole class, try to classify the different accents, dialects and idiolects; write a paragraph summarising the discussion

identify the social varieties of English found in Australia; list specific examples under headings such as age, gender, sexual orientation, ethnicity, region, socio-economic background, level of education; consider the phonological, lexical and syntactic differences found in each variety

identify the key features of Aboriginal dialect as exemplified in a novel such *Deadly Unna* by Philip Gwynne, or the anthology of short stories *Going Home* by Archie Weller

analyse the distinctive features of an ethnolect such as used in the film *Wog Boy*; examine how the lead character uses language as a marker of his identity

record the hourly radio news reports on the same day from two different radio stations; discuss the types of items which are considered newsworthy, the role of the reporter in each, and discuss how the language of each reflects or suits the perceived identity of the audience

using the International Phonetic Alphabet (IPA), compare the language varieties used by politicians and television personalities; identify the phonological, syntactic and lexical differences, and comment on how their language choices contribute to our understanding their identities

examine your own school or sporting club songs and discuss which
characteristics or behaviours are being encouraged; compare this with a Primary
School or an AFL Club song

examine and listen to the music of the national anthems from three different
countries from a site such as www.thenationalanthems.com, and consider which
values are promoted; suggest how the people of that country see themselves;
examine the Australian national anthem, and consider which values we consider
important to us as Australians

discuss the notion of a prestige variety of language, and reflect upon your own
attitudes toward people who speak differently to you; which varieties are given
prestige status in Australia? in your school?

examine newspaper reports and opinion pieces which comment on issues such
as the decline of Australian English, or its increasing Americanisation; consider the
values and attitudes of the writers, and discuss the differences between linguistic
prescriptivism and descriptivism

compare satirical sitcoms from Australia, England and the United States such
as *Kath and Kim*, *The Vicar of Dibly*, and *The Simpsons*; identify the differences in
phonology, lexicology, prosodic and grammatical patterns, and comment on the
different identities portrayed, and how language is used to exaggerate and satirise

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Detailed example

LANGUAGE VARIETY AND IDENTITY

View the film *Wog Boy* directed by Aleksi
Vellis. Record the different varieties of English
encountered in the film. Draw up a table using
headings on the y–axis such as Greek ethnolect,
Chinese ethnolect, Cultivated Australian, General
Australian, Broad Australian. List the subsystems
of language on the x–axis and find examples
demonstrating each variety.

Scene Analysis:

- Revisit the scene when Steve is pulled over
  by the policeman and policewoman. Firstly in
  pairs, then as a whole class, consider: Why
  was Steve pulled over in the first place? Why
  does he have difficulty understanding the male
  policeman? Why might the male police officer
  use such language? How does the female police
  officer 'translate' the language. How does Steve
  effectively defuse the situation?

- Consider the two scenes with Derryn Hinch.
  Why does Derryn change his attitude toward
  Steve? How does he use language to reflect this
  change?

- Consider the language used by the Minister
  for Employment. What assumptions does she
  make about Steve? What does she base these
  assumptions upon?

- Steve makes a speech to a group of
  businessmen and businesswomen. Why does he
  receive a hearty ovation at the end? How does
  his speech reflect his identity?

Write a response to one of the following topics:

- *Wog Boy* shows how language can shape and
  reflect the identity of users. Discuss.

- *Wog Boy* reflects society's negative attitude
  toward varieties of Australian English. Do you
  agree?

AREA OF STUDY 2: Language variation according to use

Outcome 2	***Examples of learning activities***
Identify the ways in which language features are used in societal interaction and analyse variations in language use.	record the different greetings you use over the course of the day; compare how you greet your parents, friends, teachers, and strangers; in small groups, discuss which factors influence what you say in these different situations, and report these findings to the whole class
	view an episode of a television verson of a period drama such as *Pride and Prejudice* and examine how the characters use excessive politeness at times to either lessen or increase social distance; decide which is happening in each instance; consider the ramifications of some characters not revealing their true feelings
	watch the episode entitled 'Working Class Man' from the *Frontline* (ABC television series) and examine how the characters use language in different ways to suit their audience
	role-play the different ways in which people can ask for things to be done; for example, closing a door; classify the different ways into sentence types: is the request imperative, interrogative, declarative or exclamative? why are certain sentence types more appropriate in certain situations?
	in small groups, compile a list of all the words and phrases used in society today to describe 'death' and 'sex'; decide which are euphemisms and which are dysphemisms, and discuss the different connotations of each; also consider why other words such as 'drunk' and 'drugs' have euphemisms and dysphemisms attached to them; record your conclusions and observations, and reflect upon the Principle of Appropriateness
	investigate the language of the sub-culture of a particular leisure activity, such as surfing or playing computer games; discuss how the users of this language create a group identity which can exclude others, whether deliberately or not
	write a list of words that are particular to your or your parents' workplace, which would not be considered Standard Australian English; discuss why these words are used
	read the story of 'Red Riding Hood' from *Politically Correct Bedtime Stories: Modern Tales for our Life and Times* (1994) by James Finn Garner and discuss the changing social expectations of language and the development of taboo with regard to gender, sexuality disability, race and ethnicity
	read an extract from a novel dealing with prejudice and discrimination such as Chapter 11 from the novel *The Longest Memory* by Fred D'Aguiar; look at how the editor of *The Virginian* uses language to explain and excuse the treatment of slaves
	visit http://libertus.net/ and read an article relating to censorship in Australia; explore the site and summarise some of the recent issues
	examine the 1984 Guidelines for Classification of Videos (http://libertus.net/ censor/docarchive/fvclass8401.html), and discuss the issue of swearing; consider how words can lose their intensifying effect over time
	read and discuss how and when to use Political Correctness as discussed online at www.rit.edu/~932www/style_guide/p_correct.html

Detailed example

POLITICAL CORRECTNESS

1. Read 'Red Riding Hood' from *Politically Correct Bedtime Stories: Modern Tales for our Life and Times* (1994) by James Finn Garner.

   List all the words that are considered politically correct and write next to them an alternative, more common word.

2. In small groups, classify the politically correct items on your list into three or four subheadings, and compare your classification with other groups. Discuss any differences.

3. Discuss why we find humour in the story. In your discussion, consider why we have politically correct language, and how some people reject it as a hindrance to clarity.

4. In small groups or as a whole class, decide upon definitions of terms such as 'minority group', 'disadvantaged', and 'mainstream' and talk about how they relate to notions of political correctness.

5. Divide the class into small groups and allocate to each a group of people for whom political correct terms have been created (such as Aboriginies, blind, teenagers, elderly or people with a disability). Each group will contact people who are in or who represent these sections of the community and identify what the main causes for concern are in relation to language use, and where discrimination may occur. They will then create a pamphlet outlining these concerns and containing guidelines suggesting how discrimination can be minimised, which terminology should be used, and when it is appropriate to do so.

Unit 4: Texts in their Australian contexts

AREA OF STUDY 1: Spoken language

Outcome 1

Identify and analyse distinctive features of spoken English texts involving more than one speaker.

Examples of learning activities

select two students to write down on an overhead or in a PowerPoint presentation some details of an interesting event or story that took place in their lives recently; then ask the same students to verbally recount the experience to the class using a tape recorder to record what is said; use the overhead and the recording to examine the syntactic and discourse features of the two texts, noting the differences between speech and writing; students could then accurately transcribe the monologue, using accepted notation

brainstorm and discuss the advantages and disadvantages of speech and writing; consider which is the most prestigious in our society and why

list the range that spoken English texts can have within the one domain, such as sport, and arrange the texts from most formal to least formal; consider the spectators, players, coaches and commentators; discuss how the structure and content of these texts is influenced by audience, context and function

record and transcribe a short segment of a semi-scripted television program; examine how the participants take turns and overlap, and use other features of spoken language

analyse a segment of talkback radio, and examine how the host responds to different callers, and to what extent the host manages the topic; also consider the importance of being able to have the last word

examine a transcript of a telephone conversation and discuss the significance of back channelling and phatic talk; define the relationship between the speakers

examine the opening scene of any play and discuss the importance of the dialogue in helping us to understand a character; identify the particular words or phrases that help you understand them; debate which is more significant to your appreciation and enjoyment of the characters and the play as a whole: the spoken language and accompanying paralinguistic features, or the costume, music, lighting and set design

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Detailed example

TYPES AND FEATURES OF SPOKEN LANGUAGE

1. As a class, brainstorm the list of all the different spoken interactions that would take place at a game of football. Consider the spectators, players, commentators, food sellers etc.

2. In pairs, number these in ascending order from most formal to least formal, and be prepared to justify your selection when presenting to the class.

3. Each pair then selects one spoken interaction and prepares a semi-scripted role-play. Perform these to the class and record each role-play using a video camera or tape recorder. Select three quite different spoken interactions to transcribe, and distribute the transcriptions to the class.

4. Annotate each transcript, identifying the features of spoken language referred to in the study design.

5. Compare all three transcripts and discuss the link between spoken language features used and the audience, function and context of the transcript.

AREA OF STUDY 2: Written language

Outcome 2	**Examples of learning activities**
Identify and analyse distinctive features of written English texts.	write a progressive story, where each person in the class writes for two or three minutes, and then passes their paper onto the next person whose job it is to continue the story in a different writing style; the teacher will announce each time the genre or style of writing expected; for example, students might begin writing in the style of a fairy tale, then write in the style of an advertisement, followed by the style of an email; the aim is to achieve coherence within the text, while writing in different styles or genres; the finished products can be read to the class
	compare the way that the same event is reported in *The Age* and *The Herald Sun*, examining how lexical and syntactic choices in particular reveal assumptions about readers' values and general knowledge
	print off a section of written text from an internet chat site such as MSN Messenger and analyse the lexical choice, syntax and morphological structure of the text; consider its similarity to speech; examine how cohesion and coherence is achieved within the text
	log onto the websites of the Labor and Liberal parties (www.alp.org.au and www. liberal.org.au) and analyse their use of written language
	compare the language of a book for children such as *Where Did I Come From* with a high school text book on human reproduction
	collect a range of famous advertising slogans from companies such as Coke, Nike, McDonalds and the TAC; analyse them using appropriate linguistic terminology, identify any phonological or semantic patterning and discuss any similarities or differences between them
	identify and discuss the phonological stylistic features of a ballad or a hymn
	read a legal document such as a will, a building contract or a piece of legislation and note the common sentence types used, how cohesion and coherence is achieved, and use of any jargon; discuss the prevalence of coordinating conjunctions
	read a famous speech such as Martin Luther King's 'I have a dream' or Antony's speech in Julius Caesar, and discuss the syntactic patterning present (e.g. parallelism), as well as the use of semantic features (e.g. metaphor); write an essay explaining how these semantic and syntactic patterns assist in creating coherence and cohesion, and how they enhance the overall effect of the speech

Detailed example

WRITTEN LANGUAGE ANALYSIS

1. Log onto the websites of the Labor and Liberal parties (www.alp.org.au and www.liberal.org. au).

2. Record five sentences from each and classify them according to type and structure.

3. In pairs, classify the material on the sites according to its function, for example informative or persuasive. Decide what the primary and secondary functions of the site are.

4. Examine the images used on each site and suggest what values they are trying to portray.

5. Select either site and examine the use of positive or negative connotations, and with which subjects they are associated.

6. Present a report comparing both websites and commenting on their effectiveness.

SCHOOL-ASSESSED COURSEWORK

In Units 3 and 4 teachers must select appropriate tasks from the assessment table provided for each unit. Advice on the assessment tasks and performance descriptors to assist teachers in designing and marking assessment tasks will be published by the Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority in an assessment handbook. The following is an example of a teacher's assessment program using a selection of the tasks from the Units 3 and 4 assessment tables.

Outcomes	Marks allocated	Assessment tasks
Unit 3 **Outcome 1** Analyse a range of attitudes to language varieties, and how language variation reflects its users and contributes to a sense of identity.	50	Select two extracts from novels which demonstrate different varieties of Australian English, such as Broad Australian and Italian English. Write an essay providing a detailed analysis of these varieties, describing them linguistically and discussing how the identities of the characters are reflected in the language used.
Outcome 2 Identify the ways in which language features are used in societal interaction and analyse variations in language use.	50	Present a multimedia report on a topic such as: 'Wow man, you are so cool!' How does the language we use include or exclude others, and contribute to a sense of group membership?
Total marks for Unit 3	**100**	
Unit 4 **Outcome 1** Identify and analyse distinctive features of spoken English texts involving more than one speaker.	50	Present a written analysis of the conversational strategies illustrated in a discourse transcription of an English text involving more than one speaker, such as radio talkback segment.
Outcome 2 Identify and analyse distinctive features of written English texts.	50	Complete a short-answer test responding to questions from a variety of written texts, such as an advertisement, an extract from literature and an email.
Total marks for Unit 4	**100**	

SUITABLE RESOURCES

Courses must be developed within the framework of the study design: the areas of study, outcome statements, and key knowledge and skills.

Some of the print resources listed in this section may be out of print. They have been included because they may still be available from libraries, bookshops and private collections.

At the time of publication the URLs (website addresses) cited were checked for accuracy and appropriateness of content. However, due to the transient nature of material placed on the web, their continuing accuracy cannot be verified. Teachers are strongly advised to prepare their own indexes of sites that are suitable and applicable to the courses they teach, and to check these addresses prior to allowing student access.

BOOKS

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JOURNALS

Australian Style (The Dictionary Research Centre, Macquarie University)

English in Australia, journal of the Australian Association for the Teaching of English

English in Education, journal of the National Association for Teaching of English, UK

English Journal, journal of the National Council of Teachers of English, USA

Idiom, journal of the Victorian Association for the Teaching of English, Australia

Ozwords (The Australian National Dictionary Centre, Australian National University and Oxford University Press)

Proceedings of Style Council (The Dictionary Research Centre, Macquarie University)

AUDIOVISUAL

Beneath Clouds (Film directed by Ivan Sen, 2002)

Growing Up with English Plus (one video), Language Australia

'Introduction to Phonetics' is an interactive disc-based or CD-ROM program developed at the University of New England (Australia) to teach phonetics. It covers topics in speech organs, Australian English vowels and consonants, and has built-in exercises. Available from: The Project Officer, Teaching and Learning Centre, UNE, Armidale 2351

The Human Language (three 55-minute videos), Ways of Knowing, Inc. Film Library, Department 1, 22 Hollywood Avenue, Hohokus, NJ 07423, USA

The Story of English (eight 55-minute videos), BBC

Viewing for Learning (32-minute video, 32pp booklet), Primary professional resource, Curriculum Corporation, Melbourne

Wog Boy (Film directed by Aleksi Vellis, 2000)

WEBSITES

http://English.byu.edu/chaucer/
Texts and recordings of Chaucer, non-Chaucerian Old and Middle English works

www.georgetown.edu/cball/oe/old_english.html
Old English texts

http://ebbs.english.vt.edu/hel/hel.html
History of the English language with many good links

http://info.ox.ac.uk/bnc/corpora.html
BNC – English language corpora and corpus linguistics resources

http://dir.yahoo.com/Social_Science/Linguistics_and_Human_Languages/
Yahoo's directory of linguistics pages

www.edunet.com/english/grammar/
Online English grammar

www.dict.mq.edu.au/
Macquarie Net includes The Macquarie Dictionary (3rd edn), specialist dictionaries, and numerous language resources, and downloadable lesson plans

www.abc.net.au/
ABC online; good source of transcripts

ww.webwombat.com.au/intercom/newsprs/Australi.htm
Australian newspapers online

www.webwombat.com.au/intercom/newsprs/
Online newspapers from around the world – 2250 listings

www.une.edu.au/arts/ALS/als.htm
The Australian Linguistics Society

www.ilovelanguages.coml
The Human-Languages Page is a comprehensive catalogue of language-related Internet resources. The database includes over 1200 links including online language lessons, translating dictionaries, native literature, translation or education software, language schools, and information on a very wide range of languages.

www.anu.edu.au/linguistics/nash/linguistics.html
Linguistics links in Australia

www.dnathan.com/VL/austLang.htm
Aboriginal Languages of Australia, The Internet Library for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander languages

www.australex.org/
AUSTRALEX, the Australasian Association for Lexicography

www.-nip.stanford.edu/links/linguistics.html
A guide to linguistic resources on the web

http://enzo.nla.gov.au/products/alg/
Australian Libraries Gateway, search and access libraries across Australia

www.englishclubonline.net.au
English Club

www.yahoo.com.au/Regional/Countries/Australia/news_and_
Media
Australian media online

www.eric.ed.gov
Educational Resources Information Centre (ERIC) and other
clearing houses

www.shakespeares-globe.org
University of Reading Shakespeare site; a specialist site with
interactive images of the building of the new Globe Theatre

ORGANISATIONS

The Victorian Association for the Teaching of English (VATE)
290 Rathdowne Street
Carlton North 3054
Tel: (03) 9347 3918
Fax: (03) 9349 1003
Email: vate@vate.org.au
Website: www.vate.org.au

The Australian Association for the Teaching of English (AATE)
PO Box 3203
Norwood, S.A. 5067
Tel: (08) 8332 2845
1800 248 379
Fax: (08) 8333 0394
Email: aatemail@nexus.edu.au