

English Language

Victorian Certificate of Education Study Design

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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, fluorescent 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

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IMPORTANT INFORMATION

Accreditation period

Units 1–4: 2012–2016

The accreditation period commences on 1 January 2012.

Other sources of information

The *VCAA Bulletin VCE, VCAL and VET* is the only official source of changes to regulations and accredited studies. The *VCAA Bulletin VCE, VCAL and VET*, 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 VCE, VCAL and VET*. The *VCAA Bulletin VCE, VCAL and VET* is sent in hard copy to all VCE providers. It is also available as an e-newsletter via free subscription 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 online an assessment handbook that includes advice on the assessment tasks and performance descriptors for assessment.

The companion document to the assessment handbook 'Administrative Procedures for Assessment in VCE Studies' is available on the Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority's website at <www.vcaa.vic.edu.au/vce/generaladvice/index.html>.

The current *VCE and VCAL Administrative Handbook* contains essential information on assessment processes 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

SCOPE OF STUDY

VCE English Language explores the ways in which language is used by individuals and groups and reflects our thinking and values. Learning about language helps us to understand ourselves, the groups with which we identify, and the society we inhabit.

English Language builds on students' previous learning about the conventions and codes used by speakers and writers of English. Informed by the discipline of linguistics, it provides students with metalinguistic tools to understand and analyse language use, variation and change. Students studying English Language understand that uses and interpretations of language are nuanced and complex, rather than being a series of fixed conventions. Students come to understand how people use spoken and written English to communicate, to think and innovate, to construct identities, to build and interrogate attitudes and assumptions, and to create and disrupt social cohesion.

The study of English Language enables students to understand the structures, features and discourses of written and spoken texts. It promotes systematic and objective deconstruction of language in use.

RATIONALE

The study of English Language enables students to further develop and refine their own skills in reading, writing, listening to and speaking English. Students learn about personal and public discourses in workplaces, fields of study, trades or social groups.

In this study students read widely in order to develop their analytical skills and understanding of linguistics. Students are expected to study a range of texts, including publications and public commentary about language in print and multimodal form. Students also observe and discuss contemporary language in use, as well as consider a range of historical and contemporary written and spoken texts.

Knowledge of how language functions provides a useful basis for further study or employment in numerous fields such as arts, sciences, law, politics, trades and education. The study supports language-related fields such as psychology, the study of other languages, speech and reading therapy, journalism and philosophy. It also supports study and employment in other communication-related fields, including designing information and communications technology solutions or programs.

AIMS

This study enables students to:

- describe and analyse the structures, features and functions of spoken and written English language, using an appropriate metalanguage
- investigate language acquisition, use, variation, and change over time
- reflect critically on attitudes to language in both its historical and contemporary contexts, with particular focus on identity, social cohesion and the distinctiveness of Australian language
- explore and analyse the interplay between convention and creativity in language use
- develop an awareness of their own critical, selective and innovative use of language and apply it to their own writing and speaking
- demonstrate, in the creation of their own texts, effective and competent use of Standard Australian English to meet the demands of further study, the workplace, and their own needs and interests.

STRUCTURE

The study is made up of four units:

Unit 1: Language and communication

Unit 2: Language change

Unit 3: Language variation and social purpose

Unit 4: Language variation and identity

Each unit deals with specific content contained in areas of study and is designed to enable students to achieve a set of outcomes for that unit. Each outcome is described in terms of key knowledge and key 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 announced in the *VCAA Bulletin VCE, VCAL and VET*. The *VCAA Bulletin VCE, VCAL and VET* is the only source of changes to regulations and accredited studies. It is the responsibility of each VCE teacher to monitor changes or advice about VCE studies published in the *VCAA Bulletin VCE, VCAL and VET*.

MONITORING FOR QUALITY

As part of ongoing monitoring and quality assurance, the Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority will periodically undertake an audit of VCE 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 if they are required to submit material to be audited.

SAFETY AND WELLBEING

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 (ICT) where appropriate and applicable to the teaching and learning activities.

EMPLOYABILITY SKILLS

This study offers a number of opportunities for students to develop employability skills. The ‘Advice for teachers’ section provides specific examples of how students can develop employability skills 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 online 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 of each unit 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 *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 VCE English Language students' level of achievement will be determined by School-assessed Coursework and an end-of-year examination. The Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority will report students' 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 *VCE and VCAL Administrative Handbook* for details on graded assessment and calculation of the study score. Percentage contributions to the study score in VCE 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.

Metalinguage for Units 1 and 2

Each of the English Language units requires students to understand linguistic concepts and use metalanguage appropriately to describe and analyse language in an objective and a systematic way. Metalanguage underpins the key knowledge and key skills and provides students with the means to discuss elements of linguistic study.

The subsystems of language are the essential organising tools with which students become familiar: 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 how words are combined into sentences); semantics (the study of meaning in language); and discourse (the study of how written and spoken texts of two or more sentences are organised). Students use metalanguage associated with the following five subsystems in Units 1 and 2:

PHONETICS AND PHONOLOGY

- the International Phonetic Alphabet (IPA)
- speech sound production: voicing, place of articulation and manner of articulation
- sounds in connected speech and connected speech processes: assimilation, vowel reduction, elision, insertion
- prosodic features: pitch, stress, volume, tempo and intonation.

MORPHOLOGY AND LEXICOLOGY

- word classes: nouns, verbs, auxiliary verbs, modal verbs, adjectives, adverbs, prepositions, pronouns, conjunctions, determiners, interjections
- function words and content words
- affixation: prefix, suffix, infix
- inflection and derivation
- root, bound and free morphemes
- word addition and word loss: borrowing, compounding, commonisation, neologism, archaism
- morphological over-generalisation.

SYNTAX

- phrases, clauses and sentences
- sentence types and their communicative function in texts: declarative, imperative, interrogative, exclamative
- sentence structures: sentence fragments; simple, compound, complex and compound-complex sentences; ellipsis; and coordination and subordination.

DISCOURSE

- code switching
- paralinguistic features used in spoken texts: facial expressions, body gestures, body language, eye gaze.

SEMANTICS

- the relation of meaning and sign
- semantic fields
- semantic over-generalisation and inference
- etymology
- broadening, narrowing, elevation, deterioration, shift, denotation and changing connotation.

Unit 1: Language and communication

Language is an essential aspect of human behaviour and it is the means by which individuals relate to the world, to each other, and to the communities of which they are members. In this unit, students consider the way language is organised so that its users have the means to make sense of their experiences and to interact with others. Students explore the various functions of language and the nature of language as a highly elaborate system of signs. The relationship between speech and writing as the dominant modes of language and the impact of situational and cultural contexts on language choices are also considered. Students investigate children's ability to acquire language, and the stages of language acquisition across a range of subsystems.

AREA OF STUDY 1

The nature and functions of language

In this area of study students explore the nature of language and the various functions language performs in a range of contexts. They consider the properties that distinguish human communication as unique, the differences between modes of spoken and written language, and the relationship that exists between meaning and the rules that govern language use. Students learn that language is a highly elaborate system of signs and conventions, and that it is a meaning-making system both arbitrary and rule-governed, in that there are accepted systems, such as word order and affixation, that inform our use of language.

Meaning can be conveyed through a range of modes: speech, writing and gesture. Languages allow for communication through actions, whether it be producing speech sounds and graphic symbols such as letters, or giving non-verbal signals through systems such as sign language. Each mode can combine with other modes for communication, including gestures and facial expressions.

Students learn that language choices are always influenced by the situational and cultural contexts in which they occur, and are based on the conventional understandings and traditions that shape and reflect our view of the world. They come to understand that language is never a neutral and transparent means of representing reality, and they explore theories such as linguistic determinism and linguistic relativism which suggest that there is a particular relationship between a language and the way its speakers are inclined to think about the world.

Students learn that the situational elements of a language exchange, such as the function, field, mode, setting and relationships between participants, influence language choice. Cultural factors, such as the values, attitudes and beliefs held by participants and the wider community, also affect people's linguistic choices.

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 key knowledge and key skills outlined in Area of Study 1.

Key knowledge

- the properties that distinguish human communication as unique
- language as a meaning-making system that is both arbitrary and rule-governed
- the primary modes of language: spoken, written, sign
- major functions that language serves when used in a given context
- the influence of context on language choice
- features that characterise speech and writing
- the structure of language, from morphemes to lexemes, to phrases and clauses, to sentence structures and types
- the ways in which language encodes social and cultural understandings, including linguistic relativism and determinism
- metalanguage to discuss aspects of the nature and functions of human language.

Key skills

- 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 a systematic way
- compare written texts with transcripts of spoken English and analyse the nature and functions of each.

AREA OF STUDY 2**Language acquisition**

This area of study focuses on the developmental stages of child language acquisition. Students understand that in addition to words and their meanings, children learn to use the phonological and grammatical conventions of the language, as well as the appropriate use of these conventions in different social situations. As children acquire language, they can be seen to change their language system gradually in response to the language use of others. Children's language develops across a range of subsystems at different stages, allowing for increasingly complex communication and a greater range of functions.

Students are introduced to different theories that attempt to explain how children acquire language and to research about the so-called 'critical period', the window of opportunity during which language must be acquired. Students are acquainted with case studies that show what can happen when a child is deprived of the opportunity to learn a language.

Students also examine the similarities and differences that exist between first and additional language acquisition. They consider differences in the language acquisition process in children who are brought up bilingual, or who acquire two or even three languages as they grow up.

Outcome 2

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

To achieve this outcome the student will draw on key knowledge and key skills outlined in Area of Study 2.

Key knowledge

- the nature and the developmental stages of child language acquisition
- the major theories of child language acquisition
- commonalities and differences between learning a language as a young child and as an adult, including first- and additional-language learning
- phonological, morphological, lexical, syntactic and semantic development in children
- metalanguage to discuss how language is acquired.

Key skills

- 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 a systematic way
- investigate what children need to acquire as they develop as users of spoken language from babyhood to early adolescence, including how they acquire language knowledge and how they learn to use language for a range of functions
- read a phonetic transcription of English, using the International Phonetic Alphabet (IPA).

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 key skills listed for each outcome should be used as a guide to course design and the development of learning activities. The key knowledge and key 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 key 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 key 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 selected from the following:

- 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 and/or a multimodal presentation.

Unit 2: Language change

In this unit, students focus on language change. Languages are dynamic and change is an inevitable and a continuous process. Students consider factors contributing to change over time in the English language and factors contributing to the spread of English. They explore texts from the past, and contemporary texts, considering how all subsystems of the language system are affected – phonetics and phonology, morphology and lexicology, syntax, discourse and semantics. Attitudes to language change vary considerably and these are also considered. In addition to developing an understanding of how English has been transformed over the centuries, students explore the various possibilities for the future of English. They consider how the global spread of English has led to a diversification of the language, and to English now being used by more people as an additional or a foreign language than as a first language. Contact between English and other languages has led to the development of geographical and ethnic varieties, but has also hastened the decline of indigenous languages. Students consider the cultural repercussions of the spread of English.

AREA OF STUDY 1

English across time

This area of study examines the changes that have occurred in English over time. Students investigate the factors that bring about language change, including those that come from within the language itself, from social transformation, and from contact with other languages. They explore language change across all subsystems, as represented in texts that traverse the history of English.

Students examine the origins of English as a member of the Germanic branch of the Indo-European language family, tracing its development from Old through to Early Modern English and to the establishment of a standard language in the eighteenth century. Students explore the development of Australian English as a distinct national variety, the impact of technological advancement and the possibilities for the future of English.

Students examine the general concept of standardisation and the notion of ‘correct English’. While some language changes are denounced by the wider community, with linguistic change often viewed as indicative of declining standards, others occur without widespread acknowledgement. The role of prescriptivist attitudes in establishing and maintaining standard language is considered in this unit, as are descriptivist approaches to language change.

Students develop an understanding that languages will continue to change to meet the needs and reflect the values of their users. They apply their awareness of Australia’s linguistic heritage to consideration of possibilities for the future of English.

Outcome 1

On completion of this unit the student should be able to describe language change as represented in a range of texts and analyse a range of attitudes to language change.

To achieve this outcome the student will draw on key knowledge and key skills outlined in Area of Study 1.

Key knowledge

- the historical development of English from Old English to present-day Australian English and factors influencing language change
- the relationship of English to the Indo-European languages
- the codification and the making of Standard English, focusing on the origins of the English spelling system
- changes in phonetics and phonology, in particular types of sound changes and symmetry of change
- changes in semantics, morphology and syntax
- changes in the lexicon through word addition and word loss, with particular reference to words in Australian English
- attitudes to changes in language including prescriptivism and descriptivism
- metalanguage to discuss language change.

Key skills

- 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 a systematic way
- trace etymologies in appropriate sources, such as databases and etymological dictionaries
- explore and analyse changes in the English language over time as reflected in texts
- apply knowledge of the evolution of English to hypothesise possibilities for the future of English.

AREA OF STUDY 2**Englishes in contact**

In this area of study students consider the effects of the global spread of English by learning about both the development and decline of languages as a result of English contact, the elevation of English as a global lingua franca, and the significant cultural repercussions of language contact. Students explore the ways English is used as an expression of culture in a range of literary, transactional and popular culture texts.

Students explore factors that contributed to the spread of English in the past, such as trade and colonisation, and factors that contribute to the spread of English. Students consider the consequences of the growth of English as an additional or foreign language, including the development of English-based pidgins, creoles and other varieties and its effect on indigenous languages around the world. Students become familiar with the distinctive features of a number of national, ethnic and regional varieties of English, and explore the ways that these varieties show the effects of intensive contact with other languages. They examine the ways that multilingual speakers use code-switching to mark identity and as a powerful means of inclusion or exclusion. Students develop an understanding of how change to a language has significant repercussions for its users' cultural identity and worldview, as evidenced by the indigenous and migrant language reclamation and maintenance movements in contemporary Australian society.

Outcome 2

On completion of this unit the student should be able to describe and explain the effects of the global spread of English in terms of both conformity and diversity, through a range of spoken and written texts.

To achieve this outcome the student will draw on key knowledge and key skills outlined in Area of Study 2.

Key knowledge

- factors in the development of English as a world language
- distinctive features of national and regional varieties of English
- distinctive features of pidgins, creoles and English as a lingua franca
- the role of language as an expression of culture and worldview, including representations of worldview in texts
- language maintenance, shift, and reclamation
- cultural and social repercussions of languages being no longer in everyday use, especially Australian Aboriginal languages
- metalanguage to discuss the global spread of English.

Key skills

- 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 of English that have developed as a result of the spread of English
- explore and analyse the effects of the global spread of English as reflected in texts.

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 key skills listed for each outcome should be used as a guide to course design and the development of learning activities. The key knowledge and key 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 key 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 key 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 selected from the following:

- 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 and/or a multimodal presentation.

Metalanguage for Units 3 and 4

Each of the English Language units requires students to understand linguistic concepts and use metalanguage appropriately to describe and analyse language in an objective and a systematic way. Metalanguage underpins the key knowledge and key skills and provides students with the means to discuss elements of linguistic study. The subsystems of language are the essential organising tools with which students become familiar. Students use metalanguage associated with the following five subsystems in Units 3 and 4:

PHONETICS AND PHONOLOGY

- prosodic features: pitch, stress, volume, tempo and intonation
- vocal effects: coughs, laughter, breath
- sounds in connected speech and connected speech processes: assimilation, vowel reduction, elision, insertion
- features of Broad, General and Cultivated accents in Australian English
- phonological patterning in texts: alliteration, assonance, consonance, onomatopoeia, rhythm, rhyme
- an awareness of the International Phonetic Alphabet (IPA) and the phonetic transcription of English.

MORPHOLOGY AND LEXICOLOGY

- word classes: nouns, verbs, auxiliary verbs, modal verbs, adjectives, adverbs, prepositions, pronouns, conjunctions, determiners, interjections
- function words and content words
- affixation: prefix, suffix, infix
- inflection and derivation
- root, bound and free morphemes
- suffixation in Australian English
- word formation processes: blends, acronyms, initialisms, shortenings, compounding, contractions, collocations, neologisms
- morphological and lexical patterning in texts.

SYNTAX

- phrases, clauses and sentences
- sentence types and their communicative function in texts: declarative, imperative, interrogative, exclamative
- the basic functions in clause structure: subject, object, complement, adverbial
- sentence structures: sentence fragments; simple, compound, complex and compound-complex sentences; ellipsis; nominalisation; and coordination and subordination
- active and passive voice, including agentless passives
- syntactic patterning in texts: antithesis, listing, parallelism.

DISCOURSE

- factors that contribute to a text's coherence: cohesion, inference, logical ordering, formatting, consistency and conventions
- factors that contribute to a text's cohesion: information flow including clefting, front focus and end focus; anaphoric and cataphoric reference; deictics; repetition; synonymy, antonymy and hyponymy; collocation; ellipses; substitution; conjunctions and adverbials
- features of spoken discourse: pauses, false starts, repetition, repairs, openings and closings, adjacency pairs, overlapping speech, interrogative tags, and discourse particles
- strategies in spoken discourse: topic management, turn-taking, holding the floor, minimal responses
- conventions for the transcription of spoken English.

SEMANTICS

- semantic fields
- lexical choice and semantic patterning in texts: irony, metaphor, oxymoron, simile, personification, animation, puns, lexical ambiguity
- lexical meaning, especially sense relations: synonymy, antonymy, hyponymy, idiom, denotation and connotation
- euphemism and dysphemism.

Unit 3: Language variation and social purpose

In this unit students investigate English language in the Australian social setting, along a continuum of informal and formal registers. They consider language as a means of societal interaction, understanding that through written and spoken texts we communicate information, ideas, attitudes, prejudices and ideological stances.

Students examine the stylistic features of formal and informal language in both spoken and written modes: 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. Students learn how to describe the interrelationship between words, sentences and text as a means of exploring how texts construct message and meaning.

Students consider how texts are influenced by the situational and cultural contexts in which they occur. They examine how function, field, mode, setting and the relationships between participants all contribute to a person's language choices, as do the values, attitudes and beliefs held by participants and the wider community. Students learn how speakers and writers select features from within particular stylistic variants, or registers, and this in turn establishes the degree of formality within a discourse. They learn how language can be indicative of relationships, power structures and purpose – through the choice of a particular variety of language, and through the ways in which language varieties are used in processes of inclusion and exclusion.

AREA OF STUDY 1

Informal language

In this area of study students consider the way speakers and writers choose from a vast repertoire of language in order to vary the style of their language to suit a particular social purpose. They consider the features and functions of informal language in written, spoken and electronic interactions, understanding that the situational and cultural context of an exchange determines the language used.

Students examine the features that distinguish informal language from more formal language. They understand that informal language often lacks the carefully planned and elaborate structure of formal texts and is more likely to play an important role in building rapport. They understand that users of informal language may be idiosyncratic in their linguistic choices and structure texts in a non-linear

way, and they explore the role of colloquialisms and non-Standard English in establishing informal registers. Students examine texts including conversations, narratives, monologues, interviews and unscripted commentaries, in which speakers use informal language. They also consider informal texts produced by writers, including narratives, advertisements, journals, notes, and electronic or other written interactions involving one or more participants. Students consider features of ‘chat’ associated with both speaking and writing, such as a reliance on sequencing, cooperation and turn-taking, as well as features that are particular to each mode. Students learn that speakers have at their disposal a support system of prosodic and paralinguistic cues that they can use to organise and present information. They explore how writers may choose to rely on abbreviations, spellings which reflect pronunciation and prosodic patterns, emoticons and context-specific graphemes. Both written and spoken informal texts may contain non-fluency features, ellipses, shortened lexical forms and syntactic complexity.

Students investigate how informal language can be used to meet participants’ positive face needs – the need to be liked, respected and treated as a member of a group; how informal language choices can build rapport by encouraging inclusiveness, intimacy, solidarity and equality; and how informal language features such as slang and swearing patterns are particularly important in encouraging linguistic innovation and in-group membership.

Outcome 1

On completion of this unit the student should be able to identify and analyse distinctive features of informal language in written and spoken texts.

To achieve this outcome the student will draw on key knowledge and key skills outlined in Area of Study 1.

Key knowledge

- the role of Standard and non-Standard English in creating formal and informal texts
- differences in the nature and functions of formal and informal texts
- the relationship between the context and the features of language in informal texts
- stylistic features in informal speech and writing, including phonological patterning, syntactic patterning, morphological patterning, and lexical choice and semantic patterning
- major discourse strategies used by speakers and the ways in which cooperation is achieved
- the use of informal language in
 - encouraging intimacy, solidarity and equality
 - maintaining positive face needs
 - promoting linguistic innovation
 - supporting in-group membership
- conventions for the transcription of spoken English texts
- metalanguage to discuss informal language in texts.

Key skills

- define key linguistic concepts as they relate to informal language in texts
- use key concepts and metalanguage appropriately to describe and analyse spoken and written language use in an objective and a systematic way
- analyse the effects of context on language choices
- analyse the nature, features and functions of informal written texts and transcripts of informal spoken English.

AREA OF STUDY 2

Formal language

In this area of study students consider the way speakers and writers choose from a repertoire of language in order to achieve a particular purpose. As with informal language, the situational and cultural context determines whether people use formal language and in which mode they choose to communicate.

Students examine the features and functions of formal language, particularly in literature and the public domain. They understand that formal language, in all modes, tends to be less ambiguous, more cohesive, and is more likely to make explicit aspects of the presumed context. They examine formal texts, exploring how writers and speakers are more likely to consider how their audience might interpret their message, packaging it appropriately with attention to the art of rhetoric. Students learn that formal written texts are more likely to have been edited while formal spoken texts may have been rehearsed. They examine such formal written texts as legal documents, bureaucratic policy and procedures, official documents, informational prose and literature. They also examine formal language in spoken texts such as speeches, lectures, oaths, liturgies, performances and monologues. Formal speech has many of the organisational and stylistic features of written language, but also draws on paralinguistic features such as gesture and eye contact and prosodic cues such as pitch, stress and intonation.

Students investigate the range of ways formal language can be used to perform social functions. They investigate how formal language can be used to meet participants' negative face needs – the need to be autonomous and act without imposition from others. Formal language choices, particularly politeness strategies, can also reinforce social distance and relationship hierarchies, while varieties such as jargon can reinforce the user's authority and expertise as well as promoting in-group solidarity.

Students examine texts in which speakers and writers use formal language to celebrate and commemorate, and they explore how formal language can be used to clarify, manipulate or obfuscate, particularly in public language – the language of politics, media, the law and bureaucracy. Students learn that formal language enables users to carefully negotiate social taboos through the employment of euphemisms, non-discriminatory language, and political correctness. They explore how variations in style reveal much about the intentions and values of speakers or writers, as well as the situational and social contexts in which formal texts are created.

Outcome 2

On completion of this unit the student should be able to identify and analyse distinctive features of formal language in written and spoken texts.

To achieve this outcome the student will draw on key knowledge and key skills outlined in Area of Study 2.

Key knowledge

- the nature and functions of formal and informal texts
- the relationship between the context and the features of language in formal texts
- the features and functions of formal writing and formal speech as represented in a range of texts from literature and the public domain
- the role of discourse features and lexical choice in creating textual cohesion and coherence
- stylistic features in formal speech and writing, including phonological patterning, syntactic patterning, morphological patterning, and lexical choice and semantic patterning

- the use of formal language in
 - reinforcing social distance and authority
 - establishing expertise
 - promoting social harmony and negotiating social taboos
 - clarifying, manipulating or obfuscating
- metalanguage to discuss formal language in texts.

Key skills

- define key linguistic concepts as they relate to formal language in texts
- use key concepts and metalanguage appropriately to describe and analyse spoken and written language in an objective and a systematic way
- analyse the effects of context on language choices
- analyse the nature, features and functions of formal texts
- evaluate features of language in the public domain.

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 online an assessment handbook for this study that includes advice on the assessment tasks and performance descriptors for assessment.

The key knowledge and key skills listed for each outcome should be used as a guide to course design and the development of learning activities. The key knowledge and key 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 key 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.

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

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 the assessment handbook published online 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 teachers provide a range of options for the same assessment task, they should ensure that the options are of comparable scope and demand. Teachers should select a variety of assessment tasks for their program to reflect the key knowledge and key skills being assessed and to provide for different learning styles.

Outcomes	Marks allocated*	Assessment tasks
Outcome 1 Identify and analyse distinctive features of informal language in written and spoken texts.	50	Analysis of one or more samples of informal language in any one or a combination of the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • an essay • a written report of an investigation • a folio • a short-answer test • an oral presentation • a multimodal presentation.
Outcome 2 Identify and analyse distinctive features of formal language in written and spoken texts.	50	Analysis of one or more samples of formal language in any one or a combination of the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • an essay • a written report of an investigation • a folio • a short-answer test • an oral presentation • a multimodal presentation.
Total marks	100	

*School-assessed Coursework for Unit 3 contributes 25 per cent.

Unit 4: Language variation and identity

In this unit students focus on the role of language in establishing and challenging different identities. Many varieties of English exist in contemporary Australian society, including national, regional, cultural and social variations. Standard Australian English is the variety that is granted prestige in contemporary Australian society and it has a role in establishing national identity. However, non-Standard varieties also play a role in constructing users' social and cultural identities. Students examine both print and digital texts to consider the ways different identities are constructed. Such historical and contemporary texts include, but should not be limited to, extracts from novels, films or television programs, poetry, letters and emails, transcripts of spoken interaction, songs, advertisements, speeches and bureaucratic or official documents.

Students explore how our sense of who we are is constantly evolving and responding to the situations in which we find ourselves and is determined not only by how we see ourselves, but by how others see us. Through our language we establish how we are unique as individuals, as well as signalling our membership of particular groups. Students explore how language can distinguish between 'us' and 'them', thus reinforcing the degree of social distance and/or solidarity.

AREA OF STUDY 1

Language variation in Australian society

This area of study enables students to understand the range of language varieties that exist in contemporary Australian society and the contributions these varieties make to a shared national identity. Australian English has much in common with Englishes from other continents, but the language has also developed features across all subsystems of language that distinguish it from other Englishes.

Students explore how the Broad, General and Cultivated Australian accents reflect the society from which they emerged and the forms that achieved social prestige over time. However, Australia is not linguistically uniform, and contemporary texts in both written and spoken modes both challenge and construct notions of what it means to be Australian and what might be meant by 'national identity'. Increasing global contact and other social changes are shaping contemporary Australian English, and attitudes towards Australian language continue to evolve.

Students learn that Standard Australian English, as the variety of Australian English afforded prestige by public institutions, has played a pivotal role in establishing the legitimacy of Australian English in comparison to other national varieties of English. They learn that the non-Standard varieties operating in Australia provide further dimensions to Australian English. They consider variation between regions,

a range of migrant ethnolects, and Aboriginal Englishes, in addition to exploring how the language features associated with stereotypes may be adopted subconsciously, or deliberately employed to invoke or challenge identities.

Outcome 1

On completion of this unit the student should be able to investigate and analyse varieties of Australian English and attitudes towards them.

To achieve this outcome the student will draw on key knowledge and key skills outlined in Area of Study 1.

Key knowledge

- the role of Standard and non-Standard English in Australian society
- ways in which a variety of Australian identities can be reflected in a range of historical and contemporary texts
- characteristics of Australian English in contrast to Englishes from other continents, in phonological, lexical, prosodic, and/or grammatical patterns
- features of Broad, General and Cultivated Australian English accents
- how Australian English varies according to geography, including national and regional variation
- how and why Australian English varies according to culture, including Aboriginal English and ethnolects
- attitudes within society to different varieties of English, including prescriptivism and descriptivism
- the role of language in constructing national identity
- metalanguage to discuss varieties of Australian English.

Key skills

- use key linguistic concepts and metalanguage appropriately to discuss language variation and identity in Australia in an objective and a systematic way
- use key concepts and metalanguage appropriately to analyse attitudes to varieties of Australian English in an objective and a systematic way
- investigate and analyse how Australian identity is constructed and reflected in a range of written and spoken texts.

AREA OF STUDY 2

Individual and group identities

In this area of study students focus on the role of language in reflecting and constructing individual and group identities. They learn that language users are able to play different roles within speech communities and to construct their identities through subconscious and conscious language variation according to age, gender, occupation, interests, aspiration and education. While individual identity can be derived from the character traits that make us unique, our social identities are drawn from membership of particular groups. Students investigate how, as individuals, we make language choices that draw on our understanding of social expectations and community attitudes.

Students develop understanding of overt and covert norms in speech communities. They consider how knowing and being able to exploit overt norms – which are typically associated with Standard English – allows users to construct a prestigious identity associated with their class, education, occupation, social status and aspiration. They also consider how covert norms – those that are given prestige by

local groups and are typically associated with non-Standard English – can be just as powerful in constructing identities, establishing those who use them as members of the ‘in’ group, while those who are unable to conform are cast as outsiders. The language features associated with jargon and slang also provide a powerful basis for inclusion and exclusion.

Students learn how language can function as a social disadvantage for people in different language communities, and how social attitudes, personal associations and prejudices of individual speakers can lead to discrimination against use of non-standard dialects and accents.

Outcome 2

On completion of this unit the student should be able to analyse how people’s choice of language reflects and constructs their identities.

To achieve this outcome the student will draw on key knowledge and key skills outlined in Area of Study 2.

Key knowledge

- social and personal variation in language according to factors such as age, gender, occupation, interests, aspiration and education
- features of language that contribute to a sense of individual identity and group membership
- representations of individual and group identities in a range of historical and contemporary texts
- the ways in which the language of individuals and the language of groups is shaped by social expectations and community attitudes
- the ways in which people draw on their linguistic repertoire to gain power and prestige, including exploiting overt and covert norms
- the relationship between social attitudes and language choices
- metalanguage to discuss representations of identity in texts.

Key skills

- use key linguistic concepts and metalanguage appropriately to discuss the relationship between language variation and identity for both individuals and groups in an objective and a systematic way
- use key concepts and metalanguage appropriately to analyse attitudes to varieties of English in contemporary Australian society in an objective and a systematic way
- explain and analyse how group and individual identities are constructed and reflected in a range of written and spoken texts.

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 online an assessment handbook for this study that includes advice on the assessment tasks and performance descriptors for assessment.

The key knowledge and key skills listed for each outcome should be used as a guide to course design and the development of learning activities. The key knowledge and key 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 key 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.

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

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 the assessment handbook published online 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 teachers provide a range of options for the same assessment task, they should ensure that the options are of comparable scope and demand. Teachers should select a variety of assessment tasks for their program to reflect the key knowledge and key skills being assessed and to provide for different learning styles.

Outcomes	Marks allocated*	Assessment tasks
Outcome 1 Investigate and analyse varieties of Australian English and attitudes towards them.	50	For each outcome, any one or a combination of the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • an essay • a written report of an investigation • an analysis of one or more texts • a folio • a short-answer test • an oral presentation • a multimodal presentation.
Outcome 2 Analyse how people's choice of language reflects and constructs their identities.	50	
Total marks	100	

*School-assessed Coursework for Unit 4 contributes 25 per cent.

End-of-year examination**Description**

The examination will be set by a panel appointed by the Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority. All the key knowledge and key skills that underpin the 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 assessors appointed by the Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority.

Contribution to final assessment

The examination will contribute 50 per cent.

Further advice

The Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority publishes specifications for all VCE examinations on the Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority website. Examination specifications include details about the sections of the examination, their weighting, the question format/s and any other essential information. The specifications are published in the first year of implementation of the revised Units 3 and 4 sequence together with any sample material.

Advice for teachers

The Victorian Essential Learning Standards (VELS) is the curriculum framework for the compulsory years of schooling in Victoria. Links between the VCE English Language study and the VELS are shown below.

VCE English Language provides students with opportunities to develop employability skills. The links between the forms of assessment in the study design and employability skills are provided in the table on page 35.

VICTORIAN ESSENTIAL LEARNING STANDARDS (VELS)

VCE English Language builds on knowledge and skills developed in the VELS domains of English, Languages Other Than English, Geography, History, Communication and Thinking Processes.

The key knowledge and key skills in VCE English Language build on students' ability to apply knowledge about language and texts as developed through the VELS English dimensions: reading, writing, speaking and listening.

The key knowledge in VCE English Language builds in particular on the language concept of the English domain.

VCE English Language builds also on the concept of text in VELS English enabling students to learn about language through a variety of texts and contexts, and texts in various modes and mediums.

Through the key knowledge in VCE English Language, students further develop their understanding and use of formal and informal register in texts, and of texts in written and spoken mode, including spoken transcripts, in print and digital mediums.

EMPLOYABILITY SKILLS

Units 1 to 4 of the English Language study provide students with the opportunity to engage in a range of learning activities. In addition to demonstrating their understanding and mastery of the content and skills specific to the study, students may also develop employability skills through their learning activities.

The nationally agreed employability skills* are: Communication; Planning and organising; Teamwork; Problem solving; Self-management; Initiative and enterprise; Technology; and Learning.

Each employability skill contains a number of facets that have a broad coverage of all employment contexts and are designed to describe all employees. The table below links those facets that may be understood and applied in a school or non-employment related setting, to the types of assessment commonly undertaken within the VCE study.

Assessment task	Employability skills: selected facets
A folio	<p>Communication (sharing information; writing to the needs of the audience)</p> <p>Self management (evaluating and monitoring own performance)</p> <p>Learning (managing own learning; having enthusiasm for ongoing learning)</p>
An essay	<p>Communication (reading independently; writing to the needs of the audience)</p> <p>Planning and organising (collecting, analysing and organising information)</p> <p>Initiative and enterprise (generating a range of options; initiating innovative solutions; being creative)</p> <p>Learning (managing own learning; having enthusiasm for ongoing learning)</p> <p>Self management (evaluating and monitoring own performance)</p>
A written report of an investigation	<p>Communication (sharing information; writing to the needs of the audience; using numeracy)</p> <p>Planning and organising (collecting, analysing and organising information)</p> <p>Technology (using IT to organise data)</p>
Analysis of texts	<p>Communication (sharing information; writing to the needs of the audience; using numeracy)</p> <p>Planning and organising (collecting, analysing and organising information)</p> <p>Technology (using IT to organise data)</p>
Oral/multimodal presentation	<p>Communication (speaking clearly and directly; persuading effectively; sharing information; listening and understanding)</p> <p>Planning and organising (collecting, analysing and organising information)</p> <p>Initiative and enterprise (generating a range of options; initiating innovative solutions; being creative)</p> <p>Self management (evaluating and monitoring own performance)</p> <p>Technology (having a range of basic IT skills; using IT to organise data; being willing to learn new IT skills)</p>
A short-answer test	<p>Communication (writing to the needs of the audience)</p> <p>Planning and organising (collecting, analysing and organising information)</p> <p>Learning (managing own learning)</p>

*The employability skills are derived from the Employability Skills Framework (*Employability Skills for the Future*, 2002), developed by the Australian Chamber of Commerce and Industry and the Business Council of Australia, and published by the (former) Commonwealth Department of Education, Science and Training.

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 key skills which relate to the outcomes.

Teachers must develop courses that include appropriate learning activities to enable students to develop the key knowledge and key 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.

In all Units of VCE English Language, teachers are expected to provide students with the opportunity to read and analyse language in a wide range of texts: from popular culture, classic and contemporary literature, students' personal experiences, and from print, electronic and online media.

Teachers may suggest reference material to encourage wide reading by students, either before or during units of study. Texts suitable for students' general reading may include, for example: *Speaking Our Language: The Story of Australian English* by Bruce Moore; *Gift of the Gob* by Kate Burridge; *Death Sentence* by Don Watson; *Nineteen Eighty-Four* by George Orwell; *Eats, Shoots and Leaves* by Lynne Truss; *Secret Language: Codes, Tricks, Spies, Thieves, and Symbols* by Barry Blake. Students should be encouraged to keep an ongoing folio of reference material.

Many websites and DVDs are also useful texts, for example *Sounds of Aus*, *Australian Voices*, *Convict Creations: Language and Identity in Australia*. For further suggestions and details on all texts, see list of Suitable Resources at <www.vcaa.vic.edu.au/vce/studies/index.html>.

Throughout the English Language course, students should be provided with many opportunities for writing, including close analyses of the language features of a text, as well as essays exploring the broader issues relating to language use in contemporary Australia. The structure of Units 3 and 4 helps students develop their understanding and use of the metalanguage needed to analyse linguistic features of a text, and to discuss language use at a deeper, more conceptual level.

Teachers should provide a wide variety of learning activities which challenge students to develop and utilise a range of skills. Students need to do more than just identify the language features in a discourse. Students need to be able to analyse the linguistic features of texts in context, explore language related issues, and to discuss and present their ideas and opinions clearly and concisely in a written or an oral format. Teachers should help students develop a nuanced understanding of the use of English in contemporary Australian society. The focus in Unit 3 on informal and formal language invites a more subtle exploration of language in spoken, written and electronic texts, and reflects the fluid nature of English in our contemporary global society. The formality of texts should always be measured along a continuum rather than as something a discourse is or is not; students should also be attentive to shifts in formality within a discourse.

Flexibility in course design

There is no requirement to teach the areas of study in the order in which they appear in the units in the study design. Note that there is the option to use more than one assessment task in assessing each outcome in all units.

Teachers should emphasise the continuity between the various units of study in VCE English Language, encouraging students to build on their knowledge and understanding of the English language as they progress through the course.

SUITABLE RESOURCES

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

A list of suitable resources for this study has been compiled and is available via the English Language study page on the Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority website: <www.vcaa.vic.edu.au/vce/studies/index.html>.

LEARNING ACTIVITIES

Implementation advice and example learning activities for each unit are provided below. Examples in the shaded boxes are explained in detail in accompanying boxes.

Teachers should consider these activities in conjunction with the key knowledge and key skills identified for each outcome within the study.

Unit 1: Language and communication

Unit 1 enables students to think about connections between language use and human behaviour, and about how we acquire language. Students are introduced to the International Phonetic Alphabet.

Example activities

AREA OF STUDY 1: The nature and functions of language

Outcome 1

Identify and describe primary aspects of the nature and functions of human language.

Examples of learning activities

collect a range of samples of language use (written, spoken, electronic); in a tabular format, identify the situational elements for each language and suggest an equivalent in another mode

search the Internet and media for examples of complaints or observations about language use; for example, letters to the editor; set up a folder/journal and for each example, identify the language feature being discussed or the subsystem referred to; keep adding to journal throughout year

in *Alice in Wonderland* read the conversation between Alice and the Caterpillar; note what happens when the normal rules of communication are not observed, such as the way in which word meanings are changed by the Caterpillar

explore some grammar resources (books and websites) and complete some grammar exercises; debate the importance of linguistic structures and rules in effective communication

compare a sample of an email or SMS with a sample of ordinary written text on the same topic, e.g. an invitation to a party. What are the similarities and 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 – see also <http://auslan.org.au/>

analyse a section of an Internet chatroom conversation or an SMS exchange; note whether the language features are more like spoken or written language; provide linguistic evidence to support the analysis

listen to a text being 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 the words which were the easiest to guess, and which words were not; discuss why and classify words into function and content words

using three different sample texts (written, spoken, digital) break down the words into the various word classes; arrange the words in a table, 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; consider whether each word has meaning without the prefix

investigate theories about animal communication in nature, e.g. bees, dolphins, chimpanzees; compare with human communication. What are the characteristics that make human communication different and unique?

use the Internet to investigate case studies of animals that have been taught to communicate like humans, e.g. Koko, Washoe. What was the outcome of such experiments? Investigate how animal noises are represented in other languages – see website <www.georgetown.edu/faculty/ballc/animals/animals.html>; pick any word or expression and using students' own knowledge or online dictionaries, list the different ways it is said in languages other than English. What does this say about the nature of human language?

discuss the impact of modern communication technology on the traditional spoken and written modes of language

list the various ways we address and refer to individuals in our family and community, e.g. life-partner, mother/father, the doctor, nonna, mate, Mr & Mrs Steven Smith, the 'olds', the 'ball and chain', etc.; discuss what these language choices reveal about a person's values, attitudes and beliefs

write short transcripts of everyday spoken interactions (with friends, boss at work, with grandparents) and compare and analyse the different language used in each, relating it to the context, both situational and cultural

role-play spoken interactions with appropriate body language and facial expressions

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 varieties

Detailed example

CLASSIFYING LANGUAGE SAMPLES ACCORDING TO SITUATIONAL ELEMENTS

- | | |
|--|--|
| a. Hi K. how r u. We r @ shops. C u soon B
(text message) | 1. Add examples of your own and discuss how the mode and context influence the language used. |
| b. Please hold and a customer service operator will be with you shortly (recorded phone message) | 2. Identify the function, field, mode, setting, and relationship between participants in each example. |
| c. I would like to thank you very much for your continued support and hope to thank you in person at our next meeting. (business letter) | 3. Re-write each example in another mode. |
| d. Your subscription to our mailing list has been confirmed. (email) | 4. Discuss the changes that were required when the mode changed. |

AREA OF STUDY 2: Language acquisition

Outcome 2

Describe what children learn when they acquire language and discuss a range of perspectives on how language is acquired.

Examples of learning activities

using computer technology, create a timeline showing the developmental stages of child language acquisition

transcribe samples of language used by children of various ages; for each sample, identify the stage of language development of children and provide linguistic evidence; make observations according to each subsystem

collect examples of baby talk and share any old recordings (audio/video) of students as children; 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 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

watch the film and/or read the story of 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 paediatric speech therapist about strategies used to help children with impaired language development, such as those with autism

listen to the story of Sophie Li, born with profound hearing loss and recipient of a cochlear implant, and follow her progress towards language acquisition; see 'Life Matters' episode 27/8/2009 on <www.abc.net.au> and read *The Age* article same date

record a child or children talking and transcribe this conversation; analyse the language presented in this interaction; rewrite short phrases into the International Phonetic Alphabet (IPA), share with class and have them translate back into English

conduct a panel interview in which students play the roles of various theorists of additional language acquisition; each student presents a summary of their theory and then takes questions from the audience

interview a person who has grown up multilingual, or parents who are bringing up their children as multilingual; find out when they use each language – in what contexts, for what purposes, with whom? Write a report on the language use of a multilingual person living in Australian society; decide on a purpose, an audience and a context for the report

research online 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 IPA 'spelling' rather than traditional spelling

create a scavenger hunt/trail using clues written in IPA

play the IPA boardgame; see <www.esltower.com>

Detailed example**INVESTIGATING THE STAGES OF CHILDREN'S LANGUAGE DEVELOPMENT**

Read the following examples of a child's utterance.

1. I putted the plates on the table.
2. Dadda. Up.
3. No more. Mummy gone.
4. Airplane all gone. Byebye car.
5. Me put it back.
6. Dump truck. Wheels. Dump truck.

Collect other samples of children's language and identify stage of language development and discuss linguistic features.

1. Classify each language example into the appropriate stage of child language development.
2. In a table, with a column for each subsystem, list observations about each language sample.

Unit 2: Language change

Unit 2 offers opportunities to learn about current changes, past changes and possible future changes in the English language, as well as the effects of contact with other languages.

Factors contributing to change in the English language over time include geopolitical and historical events and government language policies. Students may consider the role of new technology as a force for language change, including the arrival of printing in the 15th Century and recent developments in electronic communication and other forms of social media.

Factors contributing to the spread and diversification of English include worldwide communication networks, the internationalisation of products and consumerism, and global movements of people. Contact between English and other languages has led to the development of geographical and ethnic varieties, but has also exacerbated the situation where indigenous languages are no longer used as a first language. In Area of Study 2, teachers may introduce students to the efforts to preserve and reclaim Aboriginal languages in Australia.

Example activities

AREA OF STUDY 1: English across time

Outcome 1

Describe language change as represented in a range of texts 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; summarise the major linguistic features, and collect samples of texts; present findings to the class in the form of a PowerPoint presentation

listen to recordings of English representing the major periods or try reading a medieval text aloud, such as Chaucer's *The Canterbury Tales*; discuss how much is recognisable and which words are familiar

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

trace the etymologies of particular words, using dictionaries and etymological databases, and pay attention to spelling changes over time; explore the word revisions on <www.etymonline.com/> or online *Oxford Dictionary* <www.oed.com/>

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

describe the process of codification – what factors are needed for successful codification of a language? Identify and comment on some of the processes in the codification of Standard English; trace the history of dictionaries using <www.bl.uk/learning/langlit/dic/meanings.html>

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

collect unusual examples of Australian slang; get 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; discuss some of the recent political, cultural and social movements which have had an impact on language use in Australia

examine a variety of texts from different periods of the English language (for example, *The Lord's Prayer*); examine each text closely and comment on the spelling, pronunciation, vocabulary, grammar and semantics; such changes could be presented in a tabular format

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

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

collect a folio of a range of e-language samples from email, text messaging, twitter, chat rooms and social networks; discuss whether these represent language change

discuss possibilities for the future of English across all subsystems; an example could be the role of punctuation; write a sample of 'future' English and present to class

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

look at 'Word of the Year' in the online *Macquarie Dictionary* <www.macquariedictionary.com.au/>; in groups, discuss possible words for this year's 'Word of the Year'; present ideas to the class and reasons for selection

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

conduct a class debate on an aspect of language use or language change with one side arguing from a prescriptivist approach and the other expressing a descriptivist attitude; decide which arguments are more convincing

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 lifespan?
- 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, relatives, teachers, students and friends. Present the answers to the survey questions in a suitable format such as a table.

Analyse the findings. Some points 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 in contact

Outcome 2

Describe and explain the effects of the global spread of English in terms of both conformity and diversity, through a range of spoken and written texts.

Examples of learning activities

using the Internet, locate newspapers from English-speaking countries and note similarities and differences in the written standard

locate examples of English words which have become commonplace in other languages

collect examples of unusual 'corruptions' of English which may be found in overseas advertising, product descriptions or tourism

in a PowerPoint presentation, describe the processes of pidginisation and creolisation

research the history and the role of Tok Pisin in Papua New Guinea today. When, where and by whom is it used? How important is it for the national identity of PNG? Listen to Tok Pisin being spoken on the Tok Pisin service on ABC Radio Australia and try to translate a section of the webpage

devise a questionnaire to gauge people's attitudes towards pidgin and creole languages

in groups, investigate the distinctive features of a different national English and present a 'profile' of this variety of English to the class; compare with Australian English and include samples of written texts and spoken transcripts of this variety of English in the presentation

investigate the language policy of a bilingual country, such as Hong Kong, and a country which has an official language academy, such as France; compare with the monolingualism of Australia; what can you surmise about the links between language and national identity?

write a report about English as a world language. What factors have contributed to the global spread of English? Research the international organisations, professions and movements which promote the use of English

explore UNESCO's online atlas of the World's Languages in Danger; read the FAQs on languages in danger and discuss as a group some of the factors which contribute to language loss or decline, and the effect of this on the cultural and social identity of a community and of individuals

using the 2005 *National Indigenous Languages Survey Report*, investigate the spread of English and its impact on Australian Aboriginal languages

using written and oral texts, identify some of the distinctive features of a dialect of Aboriginal English, such as Light Warlpiri, Modern Tiwi or Gurindi Kriol and others; report findings in a PowerPoint presentation

present a report highlighting attempts to save Aboriginal languages; a starting point is listening to the audio or reading the transcript of ABC Radio National 'Hindsight' program, *Holding our tongues*, presented 8/3/2009

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* by Philip Gwynne, *Njunjul the Sun* by Meme McDonald and Boori Monty Pryor, *Beneath Clouds* directed by Ivan Sen, or the SBS television program *Message Stick*).

- 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 sentence structures or expressions which would be

considered ‘non-standard’? In what ways has the original Aboriginal language 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 the findings to the class in a PowerPoint presentation.

Unit 3: Language variation and social purpose

The focus in teaching each area of study should be on the stylistic features of informal and formal language. The terms ‘positive face needs’ and ‘negative face needs’ are derived from Brown and Levinson’s work on politeness theory. See Resources for further references.

Texts for study at the more informal end of the continuum will include transcripts and/or recordings of spoken conversations, and teachers should ensure that students are familiar with the conventions for the transcription of spoken English texts. The features of informal texts are also found in written texts including those in electronic mode.

Texts for study at the more formal end of the continuum will include a range of written texts, but teachers should also select some spoken texts for this area of study.

Example activities

AREA OF STUDY 1: Informal language

Outcome 1

Identify and analyse distinctive features of informal language in written and spoken texts.

Examples of learning activities

list a range of synonyms for a particular word, e.g. inebriated, using a thesaurus to help; arrange the synonyms along a continuum from most informal to most formal; discuss the connotations of each expression. In which context is each word more likely to be heard or used?

consider spoken, written and electronic texts from within a given domain, for example: sport; arrange the texts from least formal to most formal; discuss how the structure and content of these texts is influenced by the situational and cultural context of each

record and transcribe a short segment of a television program, such as *The Making of Australia*, or a film, for example, *Love, Lust and Lies*; examine the features of spontaneous spoken language, and in multimodal texts the importance of body language and paralinguistic cues

examine a transcript of a telephone conversation or a segment of talkback radio and discuss the significance of back channelling and other strategies in spoken discourse

use YouTube to listen to the stand-up routines of comedians, for example, at the annual Melbourne International Comedy Festival; discuss why most comedians use informal language features in their prepared routines. What effect does this have on their audience and the success of their routine?

consider when, how and why we 'play' with language when interacting with small children, friends, family members, love partners; examine the language in St Valentine's Day notices. What innovative words or catchphrases are unique to students' families or friendship groups?

write a list of expressions that are particular to a workplace or other professions which would not be considered Standard English; discuss when and why these words are used

examine the Classification website <www.classification.gov.au/> and discuss the issue of swearing; consider how words can lose their intensifying effect over time

print off samples of informal language from the Internet, such as an email or a blog or a chat exchange; analyse the lexical choice and the syntactic and morphological structure of each text; consider its similarity to speech; examine how cohesion and coherence is achieved within each text

consider examples of informal language in electronic media (e.g. SMS) and compare with the language in the more traditional form of handwriting (a 'to-do' list, a reminder on the fridge, a letter exchanged between friends in class); in a table, list the various features of the language used in each of these texts

read some of Danny Katz's writing in *The Age* newspaper; in groups, discuss the language features and structures which contribute to the informal register which is characteristic of Katz's writing

role-play the different ways in which people can ask for things to be done, for example, closing a door; classify these into sentence types: is the request imperative, interrogative, declarative or exclamative? Discuss which sentence types are more appropriate in certain situations and why

brainstorm and discuss the advantages and disadvantages of speech and writing; have a class debate about which mode is the most prestigious in our society

select two students to discuss an interesting event which occurred recently, e.g. a party or school formal, and record this conversation; have one student write down an account of the same event; use the account 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 conversation, using accepted notation

role-play everyday conversations between friends or family members in which one speaker deliberately uses formal language. What effect does this have on the flow and outcome of the conversation?

Detailed example

TYPES AND FEATURES OF INFORMAL TEXTS

1. As a class, list written, spoken and electronic texts from within the domain of sport, such as Australian Rules football. Consider, for example, the range of texts on an official footy club website.
2. In pairs, plot these texts along a continuum from most informal to most formal, and be prepared to justify your selection when presenting to the class.
3. Discuss how the situational and cultural context of each text influences its structure and language.
4. Listen to a recording of an informal spoken text from the domain of sport, such as radio commentary of a football game.
5. Transcribe a section and annotate, identifying the features of spoken language referred to in the study design.
6. Discuss the link between the spoken language features and the context of the transcript.

AREA OF STUDY 2: Formal language**Outcome 2**

Identify and analyse distinctive features of formal language in written and spoken texts.

Examples of learning activities

in groups, select examples of formal language from a domain such as education; discuss why a formal register has been used in each of these texts: textbooks, school website and song, reports, Principal's assembly speech, parental correspondence, behaviour contracts

other domains which generate a range of formal language texts include the law and government; collect samples of texts in a formal register from one of these domains; read and examine the *Victorian Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities*; list in a tabular format the language features of the charter across each of the subsystems

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 maintain coherence within the text, while writing in different styles or genres; the finished products can be read to the class and an assessment made of textual cohesion and coherence

after close reading, write an analysis of the stylistic features of a sample of text from classic English literature; this could be from poetry, a novel or a play

identify and discuss the phonological stylistic features of a ballad or a hymn

investigate the language characteristic in 'oaths', such as the Olympic oath, Scouting Promise or Australia's Pledge of Commitment for new citizens

read a legal document such as a will, a building contract or a piece of legislation and discuss the common sentence types used, how cohesion and coherence are achieved, and the use of any jargon; discuss the prevalence of coordinating conjunctions

watch some speeches on 'Strictly Speaking' <www.abc.net.au/strictlyspeaking>; transcribe a prepared monologue and an unprepared speech; analyse the language features of each transcription; compare the levels of informality in each; compare a 'winning' speech with a not so successful speech: What language features help make it a 'winner'?

discuss level of formality in a semi-scripted conversation, for example: <www.abc.net.au/atthemovies/> (Margaret and David) or <www.abc.net.au/tv/enoughrope/pastepisodes/> (Andrew Denton); in placing the language within the continuum formal–informal, refer to features of informal and formal language

analyse the features of formal texts such as the War Memorial's website and/or the audio transcript of Kevin Rudd's Sorry Speech 2008 (see Resources) and/or Paul Keating's Remembrance Speech 1993; discuss the syntactic patterning present, as well as the use of semantic features; write an essay explaining the role of these semantic and syntactic patterns in creating coherence and cohesion, and how they enhance the overall effect of the speech

view an episode of a television version 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

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

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

using the Internet, list a range of words and phrases to express sympathy and condolences and examine their typical linguistic features

create and transcribe conversations dealing with embarrassing or difficult topics, such as body odour, sacking an employee, breaking off a relationship, a parent/teacher interview, criticising another's actions; discuss the language features used, including euphemisms and other politeness strategies, and how these facilitate such interactions

compare the way that the same event is reported in a range of different media (print and digital); examine how lexical and syntactic choices in particular reveal assumptions about readers' values and general knowledge

watch the YouTube video of John Clarke and Brian Dawe presenting 'Julia's First Interview'. What features of Gillard's language are highlighted and exaggerated in order to create a satire on political spin?

examine and analyse the language used in the websites of the major Australian political parties; explore the varying levels of formality and the way language is used positively and negatively to promote a certain point of view

write an essay on a related topic, for example 'In this age of digital communication, is formal language an endangered species in Australian society?'

Detailed example

TYPES AND FEATURES OF FORMAL TEXTS

1. Go to the website of the Australian War Memorial <www.awm.gov.au/> and list different examples of formal language. These could include the Privacy and Copyright statements as well as information about the Memorial's history and activities.
2. Pick one text and analyse the discourse and language features which contribute to this text's formal register. Consider lexicon, including jargon; sentence types and structures; use of passive; information flow; and politeness strategies.
3. In groups, discuss how the language in various sections of the website is carefully constructed to present a positive image of Australia's war involvement. Present findings to the class.
4. Listen to the audio and read the transcript of Kevin Rudd's Sorry Speech 2008 and/or Paul Keating's Remembrance Speech 1993 (see Resources).
5. Discuss the syntactic patterning present in the speech, as well as the use of semantic features. Write an essay explaining the role of these semantic and syntactic patterns in creating coherence and cohesion, and how they enhance the overall effect of the speech.

Unit 4: Language variation and identity

In Unit 4 teachers should use a range of texts through which students explore how language use reflects and constructs identities. There is a particular focus on the connections in Australia between language use and ‘national identity’, and language varieties and individuals’ identities. Individuals’ identities are not fixed, but alter according to the ways in which they draw on their understanding of social expectations and community attitudes to shift their language style in a given context. Individuals’ identities are shaped by their capacity to access the overt or covert norms of a particular speech community.

Texts for analysis in Unit 4 should enable students to apply their knowledge of informal and formal language features in investigating varieties of Australian English and analysing how language choices reflect and construct identities. Non-Standard English can be used in some contexts to reinforce solidarity and the user’s sense of belonging, while simultaneously reinforcing social distance from those who are excluded. Standard English is generally associated with power and/or prestige, although attitudes towards language varieties will vary according to the context.

Teachers should select a range of texts that enables students to understand how language varieties are shaped by the situational and cultural elements of a given context.

Example activities

AREA OF STUDY 1: Language variation in Australian society

Outcome 1

Investigate and analyse varieties of Australian English and attitudes towards them.

Examples of learning activities

record all the different varieties of English you hear over the course of a week; classify the different accents, dialects and idiolects and note any particular language features, words or phrases; write a report summarising your observations

in groups, investigate the major characteristics of Australian English and compare them with Englishes from other continents; present findings in a tabular format, highlighting major phonological, lexical, prosodic and grammatical patterns

examine a copy of a newspaper or magazine published in Britain and the USA (for example, *The Guardian* and *Time*) and list as many examples of differences between Australian, American and British English; include examples of words, syntax, spelling and punctuation

compare satirical sitcoms from Australia, England and the USA such as *The Librarians*, *The IT Crowd* and *Family Guy*; identify the differences in phonology, lexicology, prosody and grammar, and comment on the different identities portrayed, and how language is used to exaggerate and satirise

examine the lyrics of national anthems from three different countries using a site such as <www.nationalanthems.info> and consider which values are being promoted and how people of that country might see themselves

examine the Australian national anthem, ‘Advance Australia Fair’, and consider what identity is being promoted through the language features; compare with other ‘national’ songs such as ‘Waltzing Matilda’, ‘And the band played Waltzing Matilda’, ‘Khe San’ or ‘Down Under’

students describe/imitate what they consider to be a typical ‘Australian’ accent; discuss the similarities and differences between the various presentations, and on what or whom students are basing their perceptions

investigate and write a report describing the major characteristics of Broad, General and Cultivated Australian English accents; listen to soundbites on Australian Voices <http://clas.mq.edu.au/voices/> and videos on www.convictcreations.com/research/languageidentity.html and decide which accent is exemplified by each clip; brainstorm other proponents of each accent, for example Dave Hughes (Broad), Paul McDermott (General) and Quentin Bryce (Cultivated)

survey friends and family and, using the Internet, investigate some of the community reactions to Julia Gillard's accent; listen to the YouTube clip of Andrew Hansen's song 'Negotiate' from 'The Chasers' 4/8/2010; discuss as a class reasons for this focus on her manner of speaking. What does it reveal about our attitudes towards language variety in Australia?

listen to audio of Jack Thompson reciting famous Australian poems, including those by Banjo Patterson, C.J. Dennis, Henry Lawson; read and discuss the various features of Australian English presented in each text, including the phonological features

write an essay on a related topic, for example, 'We all use features of all three sociolects, Broad, General and Cultivated Australian English, but in varying measures according to the context'; in groups representing each of Australia's eight states and territories, research some of the regional variation in Australian English and present findings to class; discuss whether the Victorian 'variety' is familiar and the words/phrases still in use

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

read the various personal language stories of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people who were part of the 'Language Interview Project' <www.languageperspectives.org.au>; discuss the factors influencing the language choices of these individuals; conduct a similar project among classmates from a non-English speaking background; discuss the importance of language in constructing one's sense of identity

analyse the distinctive linguistic features of an ethnolect such as those featured in the film *Wog Boy* or in the satirical comedy *We Can Be Heroes*; examine how the characters use language as a marker of identity

discuss the notion of a prestige variety of the English language in Australia and reflect upon your own attitudes towards people who speak differently to you; which varieties are given prestige status in Australia, in your school, in the media, for example, view the debate scene in *Looking for Alibrandi*

examine the print and digital media and collect reports and opinion pieces which comment on issues to do with Australian English, such as its decline, or its increasing Americanisation; see <http://blogs.crikey.com.au/fullysic/>, especially 'A quixotic debate' 23rd April 2010 and ensuing comments; consider the values and attitudes of the writers, and discuss the differences between linguistic prescriptivism and descriptivism

debate a contentious language-related issue, such as the validity of 'youse' in contemporary Australian English or that apostrophes are no longer necessary in writing

Detailed example

VARIETIES OF AUSTRALIAN ENGLISH AND ATTITUDES

1. View the film *Wog Boy* directed by Aliksi Vellis and list all the different varieties of English presented in the film.
2. Draw up a table using headings on the y-axis such as Greek ethnolect, Cultivated Australian, General Australian, and Broad Australian.
3. List the subsystems of language on the x-axis and list examples in the film of language features particular to each variety.
4. Revisit the scene in which Steve is pulled over by police officers. Firstly in pairs, then as a class, consider the following questions: Why was Steve pulled over in the first place? Why does he have difficulty understanding the policeman? Why might the policeman use this variety of language? How does the policewoman 'translate' the language? How does Steve effectively defuse the situation?
5. Consider the two scenes with Derryn Hinch. Why does Derryn change his attitude toward Steve? How does he use language to reflect this change?
6. Consider the language used by the Minister for Employment. What assumptions does she make about Steve? On what does she base these assumptions?
7. Steve makes a speech to a group of business people. Why does he receive a hearty ovation at the end? How does his speech reflect his identity?
8. Write a response to the following topic: '*Wog Boy* reflects society's negative attitudes toward various varieties of Australian English. Discuss.'

AREA OF STUDY 2: Individual and group identities

Outcome 2

Analyse how people's choice of language reflects and constructs their identities.

Examples of learning activities

discuss the different factors which influence the social and personal varieties of English in Australia; list specific examples of language under headings such as age, gender, occupation, socioeconomic background, interests, aspirations, and education; consider the phonological, lexical and syntactic differences found in each variety

record your own language interactions over the course of a day; using appropriate metalanguage, compare how you communicate with your parents, siblings, friends, teachers, boss, work colleagues, and strangers; discuss in groups, the various factors which influence the language you use in these different situations, and report these findings to the whole class

examine a particular scene in a play (for example, *Inheritance* by Hannie Rayson) and discuss the importance of dialogue in helping us to understand the identity and nature of a character; identify the specific words and phrases and other language features that help us understand them

listen to podcasts of 'Tony's talkback' and the various 'characters' who ring in to the Coodabeen's Footy Show on ABC Radio <www.abc.net.au/coodabeens/podcast.html>; in groups, select a character, transcribe a conversation and analyse how the Coodabeens 'construct' the character's identity through their language choices

using the Internet, investigate theories about the ways in which the language used by women differs from that used by men; survey friends and family about their perception of a gender difference in language choice and use. What do you think accounts for these differences?

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

investigate the language of a particular profession, or of a particular activity or movement, such as surfing, computer games or hip-hop; present a profile of this language variety to the class, using appropriate metalanguage; discuss how the users of this language create a group identity which can exclude others, whether deliberately or not

examine your own school or sporting club songs and discuss which characteristics or behaviours are being endorsed; compare this with a primary school song or an AFL club song

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 your school, local community, in the media, in Australia?

watch episodes of *Summer Heights High* and focus on the language used by Chris Lilley to create the characters Ja'mie and Jonah; analyse how it reflects their age, gender, socioeconomic status, level of education, ethnicity, aspirations and interests; contrast the language ability of Ja'mie and Jonah and compare the different ways in which each character uses language to gain power and prestige, by exploiting the covert or overt norms

write an essay on a related topic, such as 'To change the way you speak is to signal a change in who you are or in how you wish to be perceived'

Detailed example

LANGUAGE VARIETY AND IDENTITY

1. Watch episodes of 'mockumentary' *Summer Heights High* and pay particular attention to the language used by the main characters, Jonah Takalua and Ja'mie King.
2. Divide the class into groups, some focusing on Ja'mie, and others on Jonah. Create a language profile of each protagonist and present to class as a PowerPoint.
3. Ja'mie King: List the different varieties of language used by Ja'mie: with her friends, her teachers, and her mother. In a table with columns for each of the subsystems, list some of the language features of each variety. What does the language used by Ja'mie reveal about her identity?
4. Watch the scene in Episode 2 in which Ja'mie is establishing herself in a new friendship group. Analyse Ja'mie's language use and discuss how it highlights her awareness of conforming to the covert norms in order to fit into the 'in' group. Consider lexicon, sentence structure and type, prosody, and other features of spoken language.
5. View the various interactions between Mr Cameron and Ja'mie, especially in later episodes. How does Ja'mie manipulate her language in order to win over Mr Cameron and secure the Year 11 formal?
6. Jonah Takalua: List the different varieties of language used by Jonah in the series: with his friends, his teachers, and his father. In a table with columns for each of the subsystems, list some of the language features of each variety. How is the language used by Jonah shaped by his identity?
7. Describe the language used by Jonah in his friendship group. How does the language used by Jonah and his friends define them as a group to the exclusion of other students at the school?
8. View Jonah's interactions with his teachers, Mr Peterson and Ms Wheatley, in Episode 2. Analyse the language used by Jonah and describe the reaction it provokes in his teachers. Discuss how Jonah's language use reveals an inability or unwillingness to conform to the overt norms which contributes to his ultimate failure at school. Contrast this with Ja'mie who is able to change her style of language to match her audience and the context and maximise her chances of success.