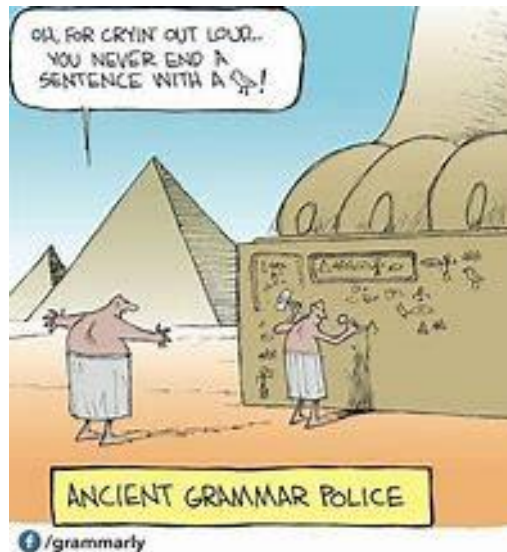




English Language

A level

Year 11-12 Bridging Booklet



An introduction to A level English Language

The study of English Language at A level and beyond is a vast, exciting and challenging subject. Some elements of this subject will be familiar from GCSE – such as analytical and creative writing – however at A level this is developed both in depth and breadth. For the first time, you will enter the field of linguistics, the scientific study of language and all its components. You will study all kinds of texts, from spoken language to text messages, to articles and fiction – virtually all English language from 1600 to the present day is on the table to study. Moreover, you will study language theory relating to language use, attitudes and change and much more besides.

The aim of this booklet is to begin extending your skills from those you have learned at GCSE, ready for beginning your A Level studies in earnest in September.

Linguistic Frameworks

At A level and beyond we study language by examining it under the different linguistic frameworks, sometimes referred to as language levels.

These frameworks are:

PHONOLOGY – sounds. This includes phonemes (individual units of sound), language devices relating to sound such as sibilance and onomatopoeia, as well as elements of accent.

PROSODICS – Elements of sound in spoken language which are not attributed to the words, such as rhythm, intonation, and emphasis.

LEXIS – words.

GRAMMAR - The rules that govern lexis into units that make sense.

SYNTAX - The order of words and units of language such as clauses.

SEMANTICS – meanings – including denotation, connotation, metaphors.

PRAGMATICS - Contextual elements that allow us to convey and perceive meaning.

DISCOURSE – Whole texts and their structure.

GRAPHOLOGY - The appearance of texts on the page including layout, size, font, colour and images.

Task -

Create a set of flashcards for the linguistic frameworks above; memorise the terms and their definitions.

These frameworks are the backbone of Language study, hit the ground running by memorising them ready for September.

Section 1 - Meanings and Representations


In the first unit of the Paper 1 exam, you will be asked to look at how two different texts of a related topic create meanings and representations. This is similar to how you have analysed language at GCSE, but you will need to examine language in far more detail, using the appropriate linguistic frameworks.

Unlike GCSE, you will not be asked to look at language and structure separately, nor will you be asked about a specific presentation; instead, you will need to identify representations within the text yourself and consider how different aspects of language (including its structure) work together.

What do we mean by Meanings and Representations?

- 'Meanings' is simply how ideas and concepts are put across to the reader or listener by a text to create a certain meaning – basically the effect on the reader.
- 'Representations' is how a person, group in society, idea or activity etc. are represented – how they are made to seem.

Task – Look at the *Heinz Ketchup advert from a women's chat / gossip magazine* below and answer the accompanying questions.

 <p>No one grows Ketchup like Heinz.</p>	<p>Discourse - What/who is being represented? How are those representations presented to the audience?</p> <p>Lexis - How does the noun phrase 'No one' impact the representations?</p> <p>Syntax - Why place 'No one' first? How is meaning impacted if it was 'There isn't anyone who grows Ketchup like Heinz.'</p> <p>Lexis - What are the implications of the verb 'grows'? How does this relate to the intended audience for where the advert was published?</p> <p>Graphology - How are do each colour, font and image add the representation? '</p>
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Task – examine the text below and answer the accompanying tasks.

PLEASE READ!!!

If you are the person who keeps stealing my mug (you know, the bright blue one with lots of colourful dogs on the side), please would you **STOP** it!!

Or, at least have the decency to wash it up and bring it back!!

Please be warned that I am **very scary** and **very fed up** – so if I find out who you are, you're in big, big trouble.....



Discourse and pragmatics -

Who would write this text?

Who is the intended audience?

What is its intended purpose?

Where might the text appear? What form would it take?

Discourse – mode

Mode refers to whether a text is written or spoken but some texts have elements of both.

What elements of the text are conventional of its written form?

What elements of the text reflect spoken language?

Lexis -

Examine the following words – how do they represent each the speaker and thief in question?

Verb phrases – ‘keeps stealing’

Abstract noun - ‘decency’

Adverb - ‘at least’

Adjective phrase - ‘very scary’

Noun phrase - ‘big, big trouble’

Graphology -

How does the font, layout and image add to the representations?

Focusing on Language

The following two text extracts are from newspaper articles about 100 years apart, both on the topic of voting. **Text A** is from a 2017 article in the Guardian with the headline 'Most people in the world can't vote, we are lucky' – 13 reasons to vote'.

Text A

Because as a young adult and first time voter, I don't want to be part of the problem of low turnout among 18-24 year olds that leaves us ignored and marginalised by politicians who focus on subsidising wealthy pensioners.

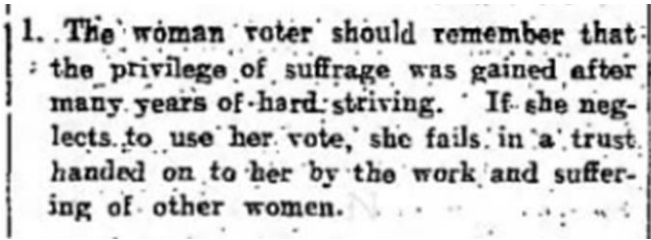
Task -The table below contains a mixed-up analysis of how some of the meanings and representations in this tiny extract. The first column is in order and explores different meanings and representations in the text, but the quotation and analysis columns are mixed up. Decide which quotation and analysis go with each feature identified.

Feature	Quotation	Analysis
The writer represents herself as new to voting, by introducing herself using the pre-modifying adjectives	"I don't want to be part of the problem".	This uses two prepositional phrases to clearly identify the problem but not the reason, avoiding placing any blame. The adjective 'low' shows that less of this age group vote than older people, which suggests they are less interested or are disillusioned with politics whereas the use of statistical data represents the writer as well informed.
However, she represents herself as more politically motivated than other 18 to 24 year olds in the main clause	"the problem of low turnout among 18-24 year olds"	The abstract noun 'problem' indicates that she views other 18 -24 year old's voting habits as unsatisfactory and the use of the indicative mood (statement)shows her clear rejection of this behaviour and her distancing herself from it.
She clearly represents most other young people as less politically engaged than her in the noun phrase	"young" and "first-time"	which would usually be used to suggest she is a novice and doesn't really know what she is doing, especially as in modern times the younger generations are seen as having little interest in politics.
Next, she identifies the problem created by the low youth turnout, representing the politicians as neglecting young people using the verbs	"who focus on subsidising wealthy pensioners"	The verb 'leaves' has connotations of neglect and politicians not attending to their responsibilities. The description of the treatment of youth society as 'marginalised' and 'ignored' implies they feel pushed out; not considered or valued, possibly linking back to, and explaining why so many choose not to vote.

CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE

<p>Finally, the writer represents politicians as having the wrong priorities using the relative clause</p>	<p>“leaves”, “ignored” and “marginalised”</p>	<p>The juxtaposition of the verb ‘subsidising’ which suggests the person needs and is receiving financial help, and the adjective ‘wealthy’ to describe the pensioners receiving these subsidies implies that this financial aid is unneeded and unjustified. It represents the politicians as corrupt or, at best, only interested in those who typically vote so could be seen as an argument for more young voters to actually vote, like the writer plans to.</p>
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Text B below is from The Manchester Guardian in 1923 and was published under the headline ‘Election Day – SIX RULES FOR THE WOMAN VOTER’.



Transcript:

The woman voter should remember that the privilege of suffrage was gained after many years of hard-striving. If she neglects to use her vote, she fails in a trust handed on to her by the work and suffering of other women.

Task - Below are a series of representations which might be in the text. Decide which are true and which are false, then link the language features to the corresponding representations.

Women voters are:

- a) Forgetful
- b) Unreliable
- c) All the same

Voting is:

- a) A responsibility
- b) Important
- c) Only important for men

The right for women to vote is:

- a) A privilege
- b) Unnecessary
- c) Hard won

Which of these features link to each of the representations you identified as true?

- The third person noun phrase “the woman voter”
- The modal verb “should”
- The abstract noun “privilege”
- The prepositional phrase “after many years of hard striving”
- The verbs “neglects” and “fails”
- The noun phrase “a trust handed on to her”
- The prepositional phrase “by the work and suffering of other women.”

Extension task

Write an explanation of how Text B uses language to represent women and voting.

Task - Comparison

Are there any features which both extracts use which are similar? Complete the table below to identify some

Feature	Example and representation created in Text A	Example and representation created in Text B
Adjectives		
Noun phrases		
Verbs		

Task -

As a budding linguist, it is important that you notice the language around you.

Find three texts of your own and complete the following tasks in note form or annotation form.

These texts could include; posters, advertisements, articles, extracts from books or magazines, transcripts, notes, text messages or social media posts.

1. What are the form and genre? What conventions of the form and genre are present?
2. Who is the intended audience? How has language been used to cater to that audience?
3. How has lexis been used to create representations?
4. How have syntax and graphology been used to add meaning to the representations?

Text A is an extract from a forum on a cycling website.



This topic has 51 replies, 34 voices, and was last updated 9 years ago by mudmonster.

Viewing 40 posts – 1 through 40 (of 52 total)

1 2

Fireworks....should they be banned?

devon_roadie *Member*

I grew up with parents who put on a firework party every year for friends and family, so do appreciate the enjoyment they can bring if used safely.

But last night I was walking two young ladies home after an evening out, one of which is nearly 8 months pregnant. We passed a group of youths setting off rockets in the street. As we walked further down the street we realised they were getting ready to launch one at us. Before we knew it a large rocket was screaming straight towards us as we ran and it exploded right beside my pregnant friend who was trying to run away from it. The explosion made her fall over....straight onto her stomach. I shouted that she was pregnant but they still carried on launching rockets at us!

I had to call an ambulance, and also the police. She was in pain and understandably very shaken up and worried. The neighbours who came out were sick of this anti-social behaviour in their area and things were very heated indeed, people were prepared to take the law into their own hands and find the youths responsible.

These were large rockets with powerful explosions. I'd hate to be a kill joy because I know they can be used safely but should fireworks be banned for public sale? Or rockets at the very least?


I hope my friend is ok, but I've yet to hear any more since she went off to hospital. The police were given a couple of names so I hope they manage to find the jobs that did this.

Posted 9 years ago

deadlydarcy *Member*

In short, yes.

Posted 9 years ago

 bruk *Subscriber*

Shorter. YES!

Posted 9 years ago

Waderider *Member*

Fireworks don't have to be used by jobs to be problematic. Wildlife and domestic animals suffer for what seems like months at this time of year from their fear of fireworks. People get injured even when not acting like arses. Round here the place ends up littered with fireworks debris. Should be prosecuted for littering....

Then taking into account the anti-social use problem, and considering on the opposite side of the scales the amount of pleasure derived from fireworks, there is no way they should be on sale.

Tasks -

Discourse:

1. How does the OP (original poster) start his main post? Why do you think he starts in this way? How is he trying to represent himself?
2. Why does the OP go on to his narrative next? What does it have to do with his topic and how does it create representations of fireworks, the 'youths' and himself?
3. A theorist, William Labov, identified six different stages in a spoken narrative (when someone tells a story in a conversation). They are:
 - a. An abstract – indicating the story is about to start
 - b. An orientation – introducing who, what, where, when etc.
 - c. Complicating action – the problem or complication and main body of the action
 - d. Resolution – the final events – how the story is completed
 - e. Evaluation – any comments or additions to the basic plot to indicate opinions, attitudes etc. These may be scattered through the rest of the narrative
 - f. Coda – a comment which indicates that the narrative is complete.Can you spot any of these stages in the OP's post? Which parts are likely to show the OP's opinions and the representations he creates in the most obvious way?
4. The text is an extract from a forum which means it is often seen as multi-modal: having features of written and spoken texts. How is the way it is structured as a whole text like a conversation?

Grammar and syntax:

1. The OP uses an interrogative for the title of the post. Why do you think this is?
2. The OP uses interrogatives in several places in his main post. Select one and decide whether you think it is a request for information or is actually meant to imply the writer's beliefs and attitude.
3. In the second paragraph, the OP uses several sentences which contain more than one piece of information. Choose one sentence and decide why the additional information was included. What meaning or representations does it create that strengthens the OP's message?

Lexis:

1. Look at the usernames the posters have chosen for themselves. Can you tell any information about them from the names they have used? Do any names suggest anything about the personality, interests or opinions of the posters?
2. The writer uses the noun 'youths' to start with but switches to 'yobs' at the end. What is the difference in representations created by these two words?
3. What is the effect of:
 - a. The verb 'screaming'
 - b. The adjective 'anti-social'
 - c. The adjective 'powerful'
 - d. The verb 'suffer'

Challenge task:

Write an essay answer which explains how language is used in the text to create representations of the fireworks, youths and the forum members. Remember for each one it is essential to quote, and, if you can, name the feature which is creating the representation you have identified.

Language Diversity

The language diversity topic relates mainly to Language paper 2 and different topics from within it will be studied across Year 12.

The basic idea is that everyone's language is different to everybody else's.

Try to think of ways your language is different to:

- Your parents or carers'
- Your brothers and sisters, if you have any
- Your friends
- Other people in your class
- Your favourite social media celebrity, favourite musician or favourite presenter

It is likely you will share certain features with all of these groups: you probably live in the same area and are the same social class as your close family, you will be the same gender as some of the people listed, have the same interests as others and similar in age to several, but all of the different influences on you and life experiences you have make your language individual to you alone.

Task -

Before you start looking too closely at the topic, it is important you understand the following words. Research them, understand them and note down their definitions:

Idiolect –

Sociolect –

Dialect –

Accent –

Can you think of any specific words which are only used by people...

- From your region of the country?
- Who are the same age as you?
- Who are interested in the same hobbies, music, fashions or computer games etc. as you?
- Who are the same gender as you?

And in contrast, can you think of any words you hear around you but definitely would not use because you belong to one of these groups in society?

Any given person will belong to any number of social groups such as a family group, friend group, hobby specific group, occupational (work) group, regional group, ethnic group etc. When you are within the setting of a given group, you will use language appropriate to that setting and that aligns with that group. This might include a change in accent (pronunciations), lexis and specialist terms, formality and register, topics and more things besides. Complete the table below and consider how your language varies between settings and social groups.

<p>EXAMPLE – Me as an English teacher at work - Formal register – no swearing, speak in grammatical sentences, fewer non-standard accent features. Teacher specific vocabulary – e.g. pedagogy, teaching and learning, attainment, disadvantaged, progress 8. Teacher specific acronyms – PP, SEND, FSM. English specific terminology – linguistic frameworks, semantics, syntax.</p>	<p>Family -</p>
<p>Close Friends -</p>	<p>An English lesson -</p>
<p>A specific hobby -</p>	<p>Own choice: _____</p>

Language Change

It is probably obvious to anyone who has ever read Shakespeare, written in Early Modern English that language changes. To many people, Shakespeare appears hard to understand and they assume that the language he uses is what people mean when they refer to 'Old English' but in fact Old and Middle English were both used before Shakespeare's time – can you find out the approximate dates?

Old English -

Middle English -

Early modern English

Modern English -

Task 1 -

There are many reasons for language change. Below are a few of the influences which cause our language to change and in the second column there are words introduced into the English language in the last 400 years. Can you link the words to the influence? Correct answers are at the end of the booklet but have a go at guessing first.

Trade and travel	Cookie (meaning biscuit, not the internet meaning)
Invention and discovery	ipad
War	Transgender
Foreign influence e.g. media, social media, music	Refrigerator becomes 'fridge'
Simplification	Cool (meaning good)
Social change	Avocado
Youth culture and the desire of each generation to be different from past ones	Shell-shock

A lot of our language has been 'borrowed' from other languages. This does not mean we are planning to give them back but that we have taken them and often changed them slightly then used them as an integral part of our own language. English has many borrowings partly due to its history of trade and colonisation. If you don't know what is meant by colonisation and the British Empire, it will really help you to find out what these mean before studying this topic.

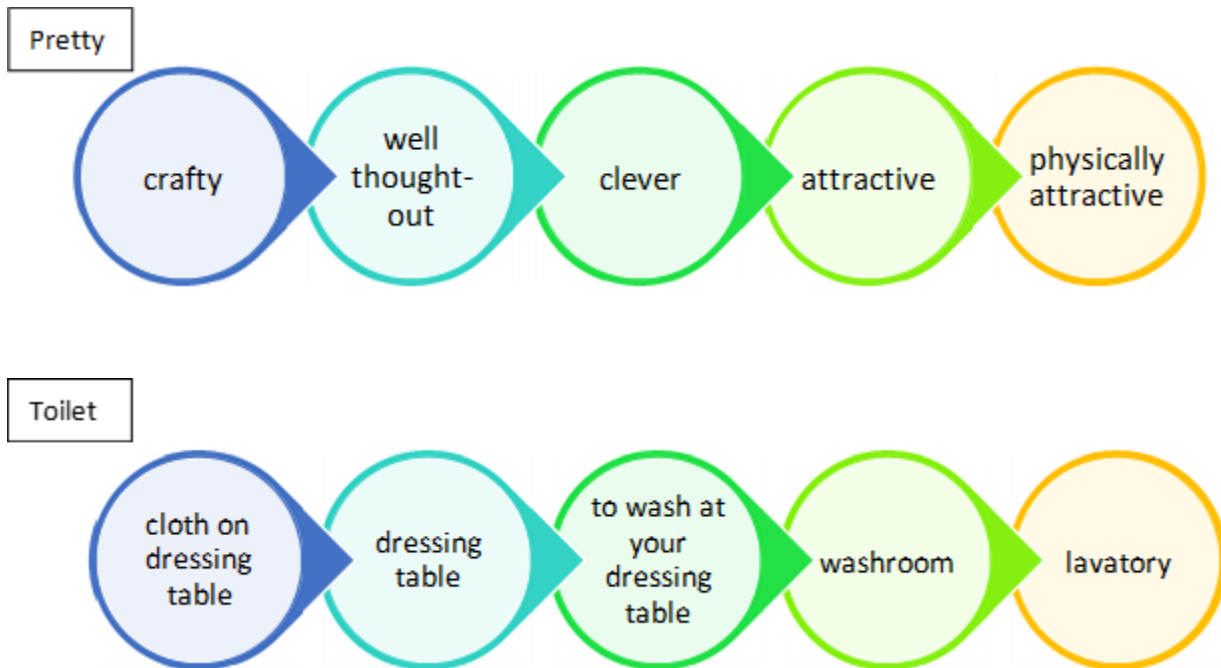
Task 2 -

Look up the following words and find out which language we originally borrowed them from. The word 'etymology' might be useful in an internet search as it means the study of word origins. Again, answers are at the end of the booklet but try to work them out for yourself first.

- Alcohol (Arabic)
- Yacht (Norwegian or Dutch)
- Cardiology (Greek – many medical words are Greek in origin)
- Meditate (Latin)
- Tomato (Nahuatl – The language of the Aztecs, it arrived in English from Spain)
- Bungalow (Gujerati or Hindi – languages used in India)
- Denim (French)
- Tsunami (Japanese)
- Ketchup (Chinese, Malay or Vietnamese)

Task -

Some words change meaning over time, for example pretty and toilet used to mean something quite different as you can see from the diagrams below. Can you produce similar diagrams showing the way the meanings of the words silly, nice, mayhem and journey?



Attitudes to language

Linguists not only study language itself, but also people's attitudes to language. All people have opinions about language, even if they haven't consciously thought about it.

Task- Consider your answers to the questions below -

1. What are your favourite words? Why do you like them?
2. Are there any words you don't like? What are they? Why don't you like them?
3. Are there any accents that you particularly like or don't like? What are they?
4. Are there accents or language uses that you associate with power or success?
5. How do you feel about American lexis and spellings? Why?
6. Are there any common language uses you see or hear that you consider wrong?

Below is an article about the dialect Multi-cultural London English (MLE). It is a British dialect which originates in London from the blending of Jamaican Creole, Cockney, Estuary English and many other ethnic-minority influences. The media dubbed this dialect 'Jafaican', blending the words 'fake' and Jamaican'.

Task -

Read the article and annotate the language it uses to express attitudes towards MLE.

What does the article suggest about MLE? Consider – authenticity, intelligibility and the concept of invasion.

How does it use language to express these attitudes?

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Jafaican' is wiping out inner-city English accents

by LAURA CLARK, Daily Mail Last updated at 11:50 12 April 2006

If you struggle to understand Cockney, Brummie, Geordie and Scouse, then stand by for an even bigger challenge.

It's called Jafaican and, slowly but surely, it is infiltrating the English language.

The multicultural hybrid, based on Jamaican but with undertones of West African and Indian, is not a totally new concept, of course. Ali G has been delivering his comic routines in his own colourful variant of it for some years.

But linguistic experts say it is becoming so common in the inner cities that it is beginning to eclipse traditional accents.

In some London boroughs, for instance, it has taken over from Cockney, the prevailing accent for generations, as inner-city white youths pick up the speech patterns of their black and Asian classmates. More than four out of ten London residents are now from ethnic minority backgrounds.

The Jafaican name, conveying the idea of 'fake Jamaican', was coined on the streets rather than in the research rooms. The academics prefer 'multicultural English'. But the message is constant.

"People are beginning to sound the same regardless of their colour or ethnic background," said Sue Fox, of London University's Queen Mary College, who is studying the phenomenon.

She ruled out suggestions that the language is simply the result of white youngsters trying to be cool.

"It's not about that at all," she said.

"It seems more likely that young people have been growing up in London exposed to a mixture of second-language English and local London English and that this new variety has emerged from that mix."

Miss Fox and co-researchers from Lancaster University are analysing the speech patterns of dozens of teenagers at colleges in inner and outer London. Youngsters have been interviewed and observed talking to their friends over a ten-month period.

What has emerged is a distinctive inner-London patois which borrows heavily from Jamaican creole, lifting some words unchanged.

But it has been influenced by other speech patterns, mainly Bangladeshi and West African, with a little South American and Arab thrown in.

An analysis of vowel sounds has shown the traditional long Cockney vowels are becoming shorter. The word 'face' sounds like 'fice' in cockney but more like 'fehs' in Jafaican.

"Our sample includes teenagers with West Indian, South American, Arab, West African and London backgrounds," said Miss Fox.

"In London in the post-war years lots of white working-class Cockney families moved out to satellite towns such as Basildon and Harlow. In their place, we have got this huge mix of different ethnic groups."

While the study is currently focussed on London, Miss Fox believes a similar pattern will be emerging in other cities.

In Bristol recently, police used Ali G-style patois on placards warning young people to curb their antisocial behaviour. They insisted they were merely reflecting the language of target groups.

Answers to **Task 1** :

Trade and travel	Avocado
Invention and discovery	ipad
War	Shell-shock
Foreign influence e.g. media, social media, music	Cookie
Simplification	Refrigerator becomes 'fridge'
Social change	Transgender
Youth culture and the desire of each generation to be different from past ones	Cool (meaning good)

Answers to **Task 2** -

- Alcohol (Arabic)
- Yacht (Norwegian or Dutch)
- Cardiology (Greek – many medical words are Greek in origin)
- Meditate (Latin)
- Tomato (Nahuatl – The language of the Aztecs, it arrived in English from Spain)
- Bungalow (Gujerati or Hindi – languages used in India)
- Denim (French)
- Tsunami (Japanese)
- Ketchup (Chinese, Malay or Vietnamese)

Further study

Below is a list of further areas for you to research. Pick a minimum of two and create detailed notes about what you learn.

- Accent bias UK – visit the website and explore.
- Paul Kerswill - MLE
- Child language acquisition – who are Piaget, Chomsky, Skinner and Bruner?
- Search 'David Crystal – World English' on youtube – what did you learn?
- Language and gender – what are 'deficit', 'dominance' and 'difference' theory?
- Deborah Cameron – language and gender – Who is she and what can you find out about her work?
- Accommodation theory – What is it? Who came up with it?
- Vocal fry and up-talk – what are they? What opinion articles can you find about them? What attitudes do they contain?