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ENGLISH LANGUAGE
WRITTEN EXAMINATION
SAMPLE ANSWER BOOK

SECTION A: Short-answer questions

Questions 1–5 Refer to Text 1

NB: This is a guide only to the scope of the answers students may give to each question. Students' answers will necessarily reflect exam conditions and time limits.

Question 1 — sample answer (3 marks)

What is the purpose of this speech and how is this supported by the register? Provide examples of at least two different lexical features in your response. Refer to line numbers in your response.

This text has several social purposes. The primary purpose is informative — Ryan is updating the Victorian parliament with details about the status of the fire at the Hazelwood open-cut mine, the progress of efforts to stop it, the effects of the fire on the local communities, and the ways in which those affected are being assisted. There is also another important purpose to Ryan's parliamentary statement which is persuasive — to reinforce the authority of his government, to bolster the good name and promote a positive image of his government (against the criticism of the community about its handling of the fire — a potential public relations disaster!).

Ryan employs a very formal register in order to achieve the purposes of his speech and this is appropriate given that this speech is delivered in parliament and there is a general expectation that in this setting standard and formal language is used.

The following lexical features help contribute to the formal register of Ryan's speech and assist him in fulfilling the purposes of his speech:

1. The use of expressions unique to the parliamentary setting (jargon), e.g. 'the member' (lns 1, 16–17); 'the house' (ln 19);

2. References to individuals using their full professional titles/roles, rather than personal names, e.g. 'the member for Morwell' (ln 17); 'the chief health officer' (ln 29); 'The Minister for Health' (ln 32). Most references to relevant organisations are also made in full, e.g. 'the Department of Human Services' (ln 27); 'Latrobe City Council' (lns 27–28); 'The Department of Health' (ln 38); 'Environment Protection Authority' (lns 35–36). These all add precision and help create a more official voice of authority in the text;

3. Use of formal terms more often found in legal or bureaucratic language and texts, e.g. 'Accordingly' (ln 2); 'in accordance with' (ln 29); 'pertaining' (ln 31); 'thus far' (ln 12); 'with regard to' (lns 31, 34); 'kept abreast' (ln 46);

4. Use of more formal and precise expressions in place of more everyday terms, e.g. 'paramedics' (ln 22) instead of 'ambos'; 'static information bus' (ln 42) instead of 'drop-in bus/centre'. In addition, Ryan uses a number of qualifying adjectives and adverbs to add precision to his statements: for example, 'full economic impact' (ln 1); 'very particularly in the Latrobe Valley' (ln 7).

Question 2 — sample answer (3 marks)

Discuss two examples of nominalisation between lines 34 and 49. How does nominalisation contribute to the register of this discourse? Refer to line numbers in your response.

There are many examples of nominalisation in Text 1, that is, the process of transforming words (usually verbs or verb groups and sometimes adjectives) into nouns in a sentence construction. Specifically, between lines 34–49, examples of nominalisation include:

a. 'monitoring' (lns 36–37)

b. 'those health impacts' (ln 39)

c. 'smoke advisories' (ln 41)

d. 'action' (ln 42)

e. 'communication mechanisms' (ln 45)

In Text 1, nominalisation contributes to the formal register of Ryan's speech by helping to make the language more abstract and technical, further increasing the social distance between the speaker, Ryan, and the audience. The effect of nominalisation is to depersonalise the language and this helps reinforce the government's voice of authority in parliament, and indirectly, out in the community.

Question 3 — sample answer (3 marks)

Analyse the use of the agentless passive between lines 1 and 13 and how it supports the purpose/s of Text 1. Provide examples and line numbers.

The agentless passive refers to the use of the passive voice in a sentence whereby the agent responsible for the action expressed by the verb is not clearly identified. There are four examples of the agentless passive between lines 1–13:

a. Lines 1–2: 'The full economic impact…is yet to be assessed'

b. Line 5: 'It must be said…'

c. Lines 11–12: '…before it is able to be extinguished'

d. Line 12: '…thus far been engaged…'

The use of the agentless passive supports the informative function of Text 1 by highlighting the more important details in a sentence. This can be seen, for example, in line 1 in which 'the fires' and their 'full economic impact' are given prominence, rather than who or what might be assessing them. Similarly, the use of the passive in line 12 keeps the focus on 'those' involved in 'fighting that fire' to whom Ryan pays tribute. The choice here of the verb 'engaged' also echoes the type of euphemistic language often used to describe the involvement of soldiers in fighting wars.

The use of the agentless passive between lines 1–13 also supports the other purpose of Ryan's speech which is to promote the strength and authority of his government by helping to put a more positive spin on its handling of this fairly disastrous situation in the Latrobe Valley. The agentless passive does this by keeping the government in the background, so that rather than being directly linked to the fires and the ensuing health risks for the locals, the government appears neutral, rather than implicated, and therefore, can 'save face'. This is particularly exemplified in the sentence containing the agentless passive in lines 11–12 — there is no mention at all of who is responsible for extinguishing the fire and therefore the government is not really able to be held to account. The expression 'It must be said' (ln 5), which contains an agentless passive, presents what follows as a given, as factual rather than opinion, and therefore not be disputed. It reinforces the government as the voice of authority within the parliament and more broadly, within the community.

Question 4 — sample answer (3 marks)

What is the structure of the sentence between lines 2 and line 4 ('Accordingly...')? What effect is created by the use of phrases in this sentence? Provide examples.

The sentence between lines 2–4 is a complex sentence with one main clause ('we are unable') and a subordinate clause which is a relative clause ('we are continuing...'). This is also quite a long and detailed sentence because of the number of phrases embedded in the sentence. These include:

1. 'as a government' — prepositional phrase;

2. 'at this point in time' — prepositional phrase;

3. 'to put numbers around' — verb phrase;

4. 'that all-important element' — noun phrase;

5. 'of the consequences' — prepositional phrase;

6. 'of the events' — prepositional phrase;

What Ryan is basically saying in this sentence is actually fairly simple — that the government really doesn't know what the outcome of these fires will be. However, it can't afford to say this too explicitly as it will lose face — for the government to retain its position of control and the support of the public, it needs to speak with a sense of authority. The use of the multiple phrases in this sentence adds density and complexity, heightening the formality of the register, and thus helping to 'cover up' the core message contained in the sentence.

Question 5 — sample answer (3 marks)

How is cohesion achieved in this speech? Discuss three different language features that contribute to cohesion in this text. Provide examples and line numbers in your response.

Although this text was delivered as a speech, it is clear that it is not a spontaneous spoken text. It has obviously been drafted and written in advance, and has therefore had the opportunity to be refined in order to be cohesive, and hopefully, coherent to the audience of the text. There are a variety of language features that function as cohesive devices in the text, helping to link the various ideas and elements in the speech.

1. Repetition: nouns/noun groups — 'Ambulance Victoria' (lns 20–21); 'community' (lns 7, 16, 18, 19, 28, 42, 44); 'respite' (lns 28–29); 'very particularly' (ln 7), 'in particular' (ln 9);

2. Deictics: 'this point in time' (ln 3); 'that fire' (ln 13); 'that centre' (ln 21); 'those health impacts' (ln 39); 'these matters' (ln 17);

3. Adverbials: 'Accordingly' (ln 2); 'at this point in time' (ln 3); 'Nevertheless' (ln 14); 'understandably, and with every justification' (ln 15); 'In addition' (ln 27); 'In addition to all of this' (ln 34);

4. Referencing:

   • cataphoric reference: 'us' (ln 6) — need to read on to understand who 'us' references, 'the Parliament at large...communities in Gippsland/Latrobe Valley' (lns 6–7);

   • anaphoric reference: 'there' (ln 33) — need to read back in text to understand where 'there' references 'a community respite centre' (ln 28);

5. Substitution:

- Pronouns: 'it' (ln 11) replaces 'the fire'; 'It' (ln 29) references 'the community respite centre';

- 'those' (lns 12, 23, 28) instead of 'people/individuals, etc';

6. Collocation: 'health and welfare' (lns 48–49);

7. Conjunctions: various.

SECTION B: Analytical commentary

Question 6 refers to Text 2

Write an analytical commentary on the language features of Text 2.

In your response, you should comment on the
- contextual factors affecting/surrounding the text;
- social purpose and register of the text;
- stylistic and discourse features of the text.

Refer to at least **two** subsystems in your analysis.

Question 6 sample analysis (30 marks)

NB: This is a comprehensive sample analytical commentary that shows the scope of language features which can be discussed. Students' responses will necessarily be shorter and less detailed, reflecting exam conditions, requirements, and time limits.

This conversation, between host Ali and caller Andrew, is part of a talkback segment on local ABC radio and therefore, although it has only two interlocutors, is nevertheless broadcast to a large listening audience. The overall purpose of this discourse is to explore this particular decision of the AFL to ban scoring in younger children's AFL matches, and in doing so to consider, more broadly, how this reflects on trends in our contemporary society in general. In this conversation, the specific purpose for Ali Moore, as the radio host, is to facilitate the discussion for the benefit and entertainment of the listening audience. For the caller, Andrew, his purpose in this text is more persuasive — to present his point of view on the issue and all the reasons why he supports the AFL's decision. As this conversation needs to be accessible to a wide listening audience, the language used is relatively standard. As the interlocutors don't know each other, there are elements of a formal register that maintains an appropriate and expected level of politeness and social distance. However, as this is also a spontaneous conversation, there are also occasionally more informal language features which create a warm and friendly tone in this interaction between the speakers, Ali and Andrew.

As this is an unscripted spoken text between participants who can't see each other, the prosodic features play an important role in this conversation. Stress, for example, draws our attention to particular words. Sometimes, this is for clarity as can be seen in line 13 '<u>he</u> was agreeing with <u>you</u>', line 20 '<u>my</u> mates' and lines 39–40 'Do you back <u>that</u>? Do you think <u>that</u> point is…'. More often, stress is used for emphasis, to underline key concepts in the arguments being discussed and in this way it supports the persuasive function of the text. For example, Ali stresses important words in her counter argument to Andrew in line 14, 'the kids <u>keep</u> <u>score</u> anywa=y' and the use of a slower pace (<L L>) here further reinforces her statement. Similarly, Andrew's use of stress on certain words between lines 30-34

strengthens the presentation of his argument against scoring. In this example, the strategic use of pauses creates a slower pace at key moments in his speech and this adds to the impact of his comments, for example, 'that's <u>not</u> (.) the <u>point</u>' (ln 30). This effect of pausing can also be seen — in line 52 where the longer pause after '<u>very</u> <u>best</u>' adds further weight to the stress on these terms. In contrast, there are moments in the text where speakers use a notably faster pace. Andrew does this in both lines 7 and 8 to help group the words in each line and emphasise that together these make up the names of the 'mentality' he is describing, for example, '<A I did m- best but I didn't win therefore I'm a loser A>' mentality (ln 8). As a radio host, Ali Moore would appreciate the importance of timing and her use of a faster pace at various points in the conversation indicates her awareness of moving the conversation along, not lingering on less important matters (the greeting (ln 1), or what the previous caller said (lns 11–13)) but getting straight to the crux of the matter and quickly handing the floor to Andrew for his insights (lns 39–40).

Andrew's use of emphatic stress on '<u>And/</u>' in ln 55 helps create an accumulative effect and, combined with rising pitch, signals to Ali that he has more to say in this turn. In a similar way, the use of elongated sounds also assists in the turn-taking between Andrew (lns 6, 9) and Ali (ln 14, 39), specifically, by signalling that the speaker wishes to hold the floor and continue speaking. The turn-taking in this conversation is also managed by the prosodic features of pitch and intonation. The use of rising pitch, often at the end of an intonation unit, frequently indicates that the speaker wishes to hold the floor and continue with his/her turn. This can be seen, for example, in Andrew's longer turns, between lines 2–10, 20–36, and lines 42–55. His use of rising pitch in his overlap of Ali in line 41 ('Yeah/, oh yeah/') signals his eagerness to take the floor and have his say in response to her question. Conversely, falling pitch often signals the end of a speaker's turn which then initiates a handing over of the floor to the other participant. Andrew does this clearly in line 56 ('What's that kid gonna think about themselves\) which then allows Ali to initiate the closing comments to bring their conversation to a close, signalled by her falling pitch in line 61 ('Thank you (.) very much for, for joining us this morning\').

Like pitch, intonation in this transcript also helps the participants manage their turn-taking. A continuing intonation, such as in lines 8, 15, 20, 25, 26, 30, 34, 38, 43, 45, 60 signals the speaker's desire or need to hold the floor and continue speaking. This is important in lines 15 and 29 where the truncated word 'jus-' initiates a repair — a discourse feature of spontaneous speech where participants need to think on the spot and work out what to say without necessarily losing their turn. An invitation to the other speaker to take the floor is often signalled by the use of a questioning intonation. This is clearly understood by Andrew who in lines 17 and 19 immediately responds to Ali's questions in lines 16 and 18, resulting in overlapping speech.

Overlaps are frequent in this transcript which is typical of a spontaneous conversation over the telephone in which participants are unable to benefit from the normal paralinguistic cues in spoken texts, like body language and facial expressions. These overlaps, however, do not detract from the essentially cooperative nature of this interaction. While it is clear that Ali Moore, as the radio host, is in charge of this conversation, she does not dominate the speaking or undermine Andrew's turns. This is clear from the onset of their conversation where Ali's opening greeting 'Morning Andrew' (ln 1) immediately invites him into the discussion. Her frequent minimal responses 'Mm' (lns 28, 47, 49, 51, 57) which often overlap Andrew's comments reassure him that she is listening to him and encourage him to keep talking. Ali is careful to show respect, through her use of language, for Andrew's positive and negative face needs. She uses his name (lns 1, 11, 58) which personalises their interaction and is a way of showing respect for the other person. When she takes the floor and presents her point of view, which often challenges aspects of Andrew's opinion on the issue, she frames this as an interrogative, which is less threatening, and offers him the opportunity to take the floor and respond — this can be seen in

lines 11–18, and again in lines 35–40. As she is in control of the conversation, it is Ali who brings their conversation to a close but she again does so in a polite and respectful way that meets Andrew's positive and negative face needs by praising him, 'good points/ and, and really thoughtful points' (ln 60), and thanking him for his contribution (ln 61).

The register in this transcript is relatively standard and neither overly formal or very informal. This can be seen in the lexical features. There are some expressions used which raise the formality of the register. These include words and phrases like 'sportsmanship' (ln 5), 'imported' (ln 10), 'education' (ln 18), 'correlation' (ln 45), 'depression issue' (ln 46), 'amongst' (ln 48), and 'thoughtful' (ln 60). However, other lexical choices lower the formality, and the distance between the speakers and with the listening audience. These include the repeated use of the informal nouns 'kids' (lns 4, 14, 43, 52, 56) and 'mates' (20), the verb 'thrash' (lns 22, 53), and the discourse particle 'yeah' (lns 41–42). This informality is supported by the non-standard pronunciation of 'gonna' (ln 56) and 'm-' (ln 8) and ''n-' (ln 21) which nevertheless is appropriate and typical in a spontaneous conversation like this.

The syntax also reflects the unscripted nature of this spoken discourse. There is a range of syntactic structures, including minor sentences 'Good morning Ali' (ln 2), simple sentences 'Isn't education more important?' (ln 18), compound sentences 'But we still give each other a pat on the back and say well done' (ln 26), complex sentences 'My question is that the kids keep score anyway' (ln 14), and compound-complex sentences (lns 52–56). However, many of the sentences are long and fragmented by non-fluency features like pauses (lns 4–5, 24, 30), repairs ('and I guess — I mean' (lns 11–12)), false starts ('It, it jus-, that's not (.) the point' (ln 30)), discourse particles ('you know' (ln 23)), and repetition ('we, we' (ln 23), 'what a, what a' (ln 45), 'and, and' (ln 60), 'you, you' (ln 61)). These are evidence of the nature of spontaneous speech where interlocutors must think on their feet and respond immediately without the benefit of drafting and editing their comments.

SECTION C: Essay

Task

Students select ONE of the following three essay questions and write an expository response. Students must make at least ONE reference to the stimulus material provided for their chosen essay question. This can take the form of a direct quote, or be simply an example or reference in the essay discussion — it just needs to be clearly discernible to the assessor. Students are expected to provide, as evidence in their discussion, examples and discussion from their own research and reading throughout the year. This can come from their own personal experiences and observations as well as what is reported in the media. Students are also required to use metalanguage wherever possible and appropriate in their discussion of language features

Question 7

'Language is central to our identity—without the 'right' language, you always remain an outsider.' Discuss with reference to contemporary Australian society. Refer to at least **two** subsystems in your response.

Points to consider

1. This essay question draws on a number of different themes in the students' study of the Year 12 EL course:

   • the fundamental relationship between language and identity;

- varieties of language in contemporary Australian society and differing attitudes towards these varieties;

- the role of language varieties in the processes of inclusion and exclusion within the Australian community.

2. Students should recognise the importance of language in both reflecting and constructing our identity, as individuals and as members of the many different groups and communities we belong to and interact with, including school, family, friends, work, church, sporting clubs, and other interest groups. We vary our language continually.

3. Students also need to explore the essential role of language in both promoting 'in-group' membership but also excluding others. What is important here is our awareness of which language variety is the most appropriate in a particular context, that is, which is the 'right' language.

4. Central to this essay question and discussion is the recognition that there is no one single variety of Australian English that is 'right' above all other varieties; rather that each variety can be 'right' depending on the context, especially the audience or participants, the mode, and the purpose of the interaction.

5. Students also need to demonstrate their understanding of the range of attitudes within the community towards these different varieties of Australian English, including prescriptivism and descriptivism. The people we interact with often judge us according to our language choices or our ability/inability to access the shared language, and either accept and include us, or make us feel like the 'outsider'.

6. There are those in Australian society for whom Standard Australian English is always the preferred variety, the 'right' language. This is the variety that is often championed by those who hold a prescriptivist attitude towards language change and variety. Students should demonstrate their knowledge of the language features of Standard Australian English and also their understanding that knowing how and when to use Standard Australian English is a real advantage if one wishes to 'get on' in society, for example, to be educated and employed, to be able to understand and engage with politics, government, and the media. Not knowing or being able to speak and write in Standard Australian English is a real disadvantage in contemporary Australian society and this inability to both use and understand the 'right' language keeps many people on the 'outer' in the community, and often discriminated against in terms of education and employment and other forms of social engagement.

7. However, what is considered and accepted as the 'right' language is definitely not always SAE. Students should discuss those situations and contexts in which other varieties of Australian English are the more appropriate choice and more likely to promote in-group membership. These can include:

- various ethnolects;

- Aboriginal English;

- non-standard varieties, including slang which is characteristic of a particular age or interest group, e.g. teen-speak, gaming speak, footy lingo, etc.;

- In fact, the use of Standard Australian English in these contexts would more likely brand you as an 'outsider' and exclude you from the group.

8. Our accent can also determine whether our language is considered 'right' or not. Julia Gillard's experience demonstrated the importance of accent — despite using Standard Australian English, her distinctly Broad Australian accent was continually criticised as not being in line with her role as Prime Minister. Conversely, using a more Cultivated accent amongst peers or friends could be seen as being too 'posh' or showing off.

9. Choosing the 'right' language and therefore facilitating our inclusion in a particular situation and

conversation often depends on our knowledge of the 'shared' language of the participants. This often includes a distinctive jargon and/or slang. For example, in a professional setting, such as an operating theatre or a law court or on a construction site, there is a way of speaking that facilitates the work of those who understand and use it and excludes others who are not familiar with it.

10. In this digital age, when technology is continually changing the way we communicate, there is a pressure to keep up with the rapid changes to online language. Text messaging, emailing, tweeting, for example, all have distinct characteristics when it comes to language. Those who don't interact online or use social media often feel excluded because they can't always access the language being used. This can include shorthand, emoticons, numbers to replace letters/sound, abbreviations, acronyms, etc. For those 'in the know' this type of language can be a type of code that reinforces their sense of belonging.

11. The final stimulus highlights another important aspect of this essay question about the relationship between language and identity. If there is no place for you in conventional language, no word to adequately describe you as a person, then you will probably also feel excluded within the community.

Question 8

'Standard English must remain the most important and prestigious variety in contemporary Australian society.'
Do you agree? You must refer to at least **two** subsystems in your response.

Points to consider

1. This question invites students to discuss some of the following issues:

   • the nature, features and functions of Standard Australian English;

   • different attitudes towards the role and importance of Standard English in contemporary Australian society;

   • attitudes towards language change and other varieties of English in Australia;

   • overt and covert prestige.

2. One of the ongoing debates in the Australian community and media is the perception of declining standards in people's use and knowledge of Standard Australian English. This is of particularconcern to those who view Standard English as the most important and prestigious variety — their concerns range from misuse of punctuation, to poor spelling, inaccurate pronunciation, and grammatical errors.

3. These concerns are often expressed in the media and the blame for this decline is often attributed to the 'corrupting' influence of American English, globalisation, technology, and in particular, social media and the growth of 'text-speak' with its own unique shorthand and slang. The focus is often on young people who are criticised for apparently not knowing how to use Standard Australian English properly or not appreciating those situations in which the Standard is expected, for example, in school essays, or when applying for jobs.

4. Those who champion Standard Australian English as the most important and prestigious variety are most concerned when it is 'misused' by those in certain situations or settings where we often expect correct English to be used, a very high standard of language use. We tend to expect those in positions of power, authority and knowledge to be able to accurately use Standard Australian English — these include politicians and prime ministers, educators, representatives of law and Church, newsreaders, community leaders, etc. When they don't, there are those who see this as diminishing these important

roles and lowering the tone or standard of public discourse.

5. This essay question invites students' opinion and therefore students should also consider and discuss alternative points of view to that expressed in the essay statement. For example, there are those in the community who would argue that the only thing that really matters is whether the meaning of the text is successfully communicated; in which case, whether or not Standard Australian English is used is not as important as the message being successfully conveyed and understood by the intended audience.

6. Students could also highlight and discuss the essential nature of codification and standardisation, that it is an ongoing process and that what constitutes Standard Australian English today is not necessarily fixed. Therefore, language change should not be viewed as a threat to Standard English but rather as an inevitable product of social change that will necessarily transform the Standard language over time. Who knows whether features of the newest ways of communicating, for example, in tweets or text messages, will eventually become part of Standard Australian English?

7. Notwithstanding the overt prestige of Standard English, it is not always the most important and prestigious variety in contemporary Australian society. In other contexts, other varieties, including non-Standard varieties of Australian English are more appropriate and in fact are more important and prestigious than the Standard.

8. Students should discuss those varieties of non-Standard Australian English and the contexts in which these varieties, in contrast to Standard Australian English, have covert prestige. Amongst family and friends, for example, we expect and use more informal language, often containing slang that is unique to us and those 'in the know'. Using Standard English in this context would in fact undermine the closeness of these relationships and create a greater social distance. In *Summer Heights High*, Jonah earns kudos from his peers for his use of non-Standard language, not only out in the schoolground but also in the classroom which challenges the authority of his teachers.

9. Ethnolects, which often have non-standard language features, also have covert prestige in certain contexts — with one's immediate and extended family and when mixing with members of one's wider ethnic community group. Using one's ethnolect in these settings shows respect for one's cultural heritage and reinforces bonds with others from the same ethnic background. Similarly, Aboriginal-English often has more prestige amongst the Indigenous community than Standard Australian English.

10. In the online world, especially in certain forms of social media such as Twitter, SMS and Facebook, it is accepted and almost expected that one uses a form of language which contains many non-standard language features — students can describe some of these. While Standard English certainly has a place in digital communication, it is not always the most important and prestigious variety to use. In tweets and text messages, for example, there is a skill in being able to communicate one's message or opinion as concisely as possible, not necessarily using Standard Australian English.

Question 9

'To fully understand the nature, features and functions of language, you must always consider the context.' Discuss with reference to contemporary Australian English. Refer to at least **two** subsystems in your response.

 Points to consider

1. This question invites students to consider some of the following issues:

   • the relationship between the context and the language of a text;

- those features which make up the situational and cultural context and how these influence the language choices in a given text;

- how the context and the register together help us construct message and meaning from a text. As we acquire language knowledge and skills, we also gradually develop an understanding of how to make language choices according to the situations in which we find ourselves. We learn how to adapt our language to make it more appropriate to the context, and conversely we also learn that we can use language, which challenges the status quo to achieve a particular outcome.

2. Students should identify the different factors which together make up the situational context of a text and discuss how these contribute to our language choices:

- function;

- field;

- mode;

- setting;

- audience/participants.

3. We continually vary our language to support a range of different social purposes. If we are describing what happened at the football on the weekend, we would probably use a lot of modifiers, declarative sentences, and metaphors/similes. If we are with like-minded footy fans, we will probably use a lot of footy jargon, including slang. Our description will vary depending on the mode of our discourse: whether we are texting the outcome of the game to a friend, chatting with friends at a BBQ, or blogging our views on the game. Students should support their discussion of how the situational context influences our language with a range of real life examples.

4. Students should also discuss how texts are also influenced by the cultural context in which they occur. The cultural context refers to the attitudes, values and beliefs held by the participants and the wider audience of the discourse. Students' discussion of the cultural context should include an analysis of the way it influences the language choices of those involved in a particular discourse. The carefully constructed rhetoric of Scott Morrison, the current Immigration minister, about the 'problem' of 'illegal' boat 'arrivals' and the Coalition government's 'solution' of sending them offshore to be 'processed' reflects the government's clear attitude towards asylum seekers who try to reach Australia by boat. The widespread condemnation of Attorney-General George Brandis' recent decision to refer to East Jerusalem as 'disputed' rather than the generally accepted term 'occupied' highlights clearly how important our choice of language is, especially given the cultural context.

5. Important here is an understanding of the role of political correctness in shaping our language choices, showing our appreciation for potentially sensitive topics and respect for our audience and their particular values and beliefs. While we may feel freer to push the boundaries of offence with close friends or family, with strangers or in certain settings like the workplace most of us clean up our language to avoid upsetting others. We may do this through euphemisms and a more formal register, politeness markers, and inclusive language.

6. In most cases, we tend to select language features that are appropriate for a given context. There are, however, instances in which we adopt a particular register precisely because it is not 'appropriate' for the context, because we wish to challenge the status quo, contradict those around those, or draw attention to ourselves in order to make a point. If we are angry or frustrated, we often opt for language that is deliberately provocative, including slang and taboo language, imperatives, etc.

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