OCR
Oxford Cambridge and RSA

A LEVEL
Candidate Style Answers with commentary

ENGLISH LANGUAGE

H470
For first teaching in 2015

Indicative Candidate Answers for A Level Sample Assessment Materials Component H470/03 – NEA

Version 1

Contents

Introduction

At the time of publication, exemplar answers from the work of students were not available so OCR has worked with senior examiners and centres to create these candidate style **indicative** answers.

Some of the work here has been provided by students not currently studying the reformed specification, hence some of the unfinished nature of the work as students do not feel quite the same pressure to complete work if they are not receiving a mark.

Please note that these indicative candidate exemplars have not included data or appendices such as a bibliography – **for the actual submission of 'live' candidate work, data and appendices must be included**.

Also please note that for C and A, and in a couple of instances for B, the images had to be changed by OCR from the original for copyright reasons. The principal moderator saw, and commented on, the original version. However it was thought more useful for centres to see how issues of what to include and layout impacted on marking than wait for copyright to be sourced and cleared.

These indicative exemplars should be read in conjunction with sample assessment materials and mark schemes (and Principal Examiner's Reports once they become available) on the OCR website http://www.ocr.org.uk/ qualifications/as-a-level-gce-english-language-h070- h470-from-2015/ . This content has been selected to illustrate how responses might be structured , and it is important to note that approaches to marking will remain consistent. However, these indicative exemplars should in no way be regarded as models and also in no way should it be presumed that these are the only way to approach the NEA successfully.

OCR is open to a wide variety of approaches, and each response will be considered on its merits rather than set expectation about approaches.

More information about the language investigation and academic poster can be found in the specification on pages 12-15 as well as page 18. These pages indicate what should be included in both aspects of the NEA. Controls around what teachers can and cannot do can be found on pages 20-22. The mark scheme that was used to grade these indicative examples can be found on page 23-25 of the specification. The specification is available to download at http://www.ocr.org.uk/ Images/171195-specification-accredited-a-level-gce- english-language-h470.pdf

Summary of content of A Level English Language NEA

The aim of this component is to encourage independent research into language and present this research in two ways:

1. A report in to an investigation of an aspect of language that is of personal interest to the student. The report should be between 2000- 2500 words (not including quotes, data and appendices).

   Page 18 of the specification outlines the areas that the report should cover.

2. An academic poster of that uses 750-1000 words that presents the student research that formed their language investigation. The poster can be printed in any size that is A4 or bigger – size is only important in terms of what can actually be printed and what can be sent through the post to the external moderator.

   Page 18 of the specification outlines the areas that the academic poster should cover.

   Students should regard this as a piece of transformative writing – the poster should be targeted at a different audience from the teachers and moderators who will read and mark the language investigation.

   The coursework coversheet will give the student the opportunity to identify the audience for the academic poster.

The language investigation should encourage students to develop:

3. appropriate methods of language analysis, using associated terminology and coherent written expression (AO1)

4. critical understanding of concepts and issues relevant to language use (AO2)

5. analysis and evaluation of how contextual factors and language features are associated with the construction of meaning (AO3).

The academic poster should encourage students to develop:

6. expertise and creativity in the use of English to communicate in different ways (AO5).

'The Realme of Fraunce' in the Middle English Chronological 'King List' Document

Candidate A

Word Count - 2793
Contents

Introduction

Dating to c.1432, the Chronological list of Kings, 'King List', is written in Middle English, fifty years after Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales*. The data cannot be concisely dated but the final event on the list, the crowning of Henry VI ten years into his reign; which took place in Paris, gives a rough date. Links with France during this period were strong, even Henry VI, upon his Grandfather's death was proclaimed King of France.

During this time French was still the language of the nobility, gaining its users more prestige and power. However, the 'Resurgence of English' argued that French influence was diminishing within England and the English language was becoming the language of power. Yet, the fact that the nobility was descended from French ancestors, dating back from the Norman conquest of 1066, meant that the Resurgence was undermined by the nobility's strong feelings towards their Norman roots, as well as Anglo-French trade links remaining strong. As a result, French was still used frequently, particularly as a show of hierarchy and proof of noble heritage, which meant the English from then on was highly influenced by French.

The fifteen verse document, gives crude visual representations of the Kings with rhyming descriptions of their reigns. Written in one hand with black, red and yellow ink, made of cochineal beetles, it spreads 10"6 in length. The length of this piece means that the author potentially used methods to reduce writing time such as cursive script. French similarly, could have also been used as a method to reduce writing time in situations where the French form was shorter than the English form. Differentiation could be possible between the beginning and the end, notably since the final verse includes a section on the death of Henry VI written by a different scribe.

Not only French features but French places are continuously referenced within the 'King List', this was due to the great influence England had in France and the association the English monarchs had with the French. Henry VI was married to Margaret of Anjou, a descendant of the royal house of Valois-Anjou[1]. In addition, every English King claimed to be King of France, particularly since the English Kings inherited large areas of French territory, mainly in the North such as Calais.

During Henry's reign he was highly influenced by his wife of French descent, this was seen as unpopular by the people and thus the influence of France was despised. This was not aided when Henry and his government lost nearly all French territory apart from Calais[2]. This could mean that the use of French was less in the 'King List' as there was animosity towards the French, and thus could explain for the crude representations of each King.

Within the 'King List' there are many features of French origin, around the time of the document a great linguistic change was occurring in the English Language, the Great Vowel Shift, this was a change in the pronunciation of vowels in the English Language[3], some historians and linguists believe that the effect of foreign languages, such as French, potentially led to this great change.

Methodology

The sourcing of my data was from the XXXXX Centre, that deals with historical documents and objects that have either been found in or relate to XXXXX. I inquired for a document that had associations to France or the French language, their proposition was the 'King List'.

To gain more primary evidence and collect samples of the data myself I went to the Heritage Centre to look at the 15th century document in person. Doing this meant that I could have some aid with the transliteration of the document, this was needed due to the complexity of the Old English spellings and characters which I did not have the necessary knowledge to accurately transliterate the text. This could potentially have meant that some features of French could have been missed. The nature of the complicated cursive script, described as a 'scribe's aim to write quickly, lifting the pen very little and consequently often combining several letters in a continuous stroke (a ligature); from the running action of the pen'.[4] This meant that it was difficult to read in some sections, the transliteration was essential to comprehend my data effectively.

Selection of a representative range of data from the very large document was of high importance so I decided to select three sections out of fifteen and choose them at different intervals, I selected the first verse, the seventh verse and the fourteenth verse; this was entirely based on whether I could read the sections and if they were at regular intervals. To determine the level of French within

[1] "Margaret of Anjou". *Encyclopædia Britannica*. *Encyclopædia Britannica Online*. Encyclopædia Britannica Inc., 2016. Web. 04 Nov. 2016 https://www.britannica.com/biography/Margaret-of-Anjou-queen-of-England

[2] Britroyals.com. (n.d.). *King Henry VI*. [online] Available at: http://www.britroyals.com/kings.asp?id=henry6 [Accessed 16 Nov. 2016].

[3] "Early Modern English Pronunciation And Spelling - Oxford English Dictionary". *Oxford English Dictionary*. N.p., 2016. Web. 5 Oct. 2016.

[4] "calligraphy". *Encyclopædia Britannica*. *Encyclopædia Britannica Online*. Encyclopædia Britannica Inc., 2016. Web. 04 Nov. 2016 https://www.britannica.com/art/calligraphy

each section I used my initial instincts and then reinforced them by researching the French features on the *Oxford English Dictionary* and on websites about French influence in Middle English. I then photocopied each section and began to annotate the transliterations and the photocopies.

Annotating the data, I looked for anything that followed with my current knowledge of the conventions of the French language, or that had been flagged to me by researching the influence of French on Middle English. I utilised multiple methods of investigation, using the small document description provided by the Heritage Centre, which contained a lot of information about the 'King List'. After being given the rough date of the list I researched in the *Encyclopaedia Britannica* for what was happening in England around the time the 'King List' was made. Other methods I used were researching words in the *Middle English Dictionary*, and finding the etymology of words using the *Oxford English Dictionary*. To conceptualise my findings, I have used journals such as T*he French Influence on Middle English Morphology*.

Analysis

French Borrowings

Meuvables – movable   Ferme – Farm

Bretagne – Brittany   Verament [Vraiment]- Very

These French loan words show that although influence of French was on the decline, highlighted by the "Resurgence of English, an event between 1200-1400 in which English came to replace French as the language of power"[5], some words still held nearly identical orthographic and semantic quality. The noun 'ferme' meaning farm, and proper noun 'Bretagne' being Brittany, both still have current use today. Yet, 'meuvables' is a cognate for the English adjective movable, a derivative of 'meuvables', meubles, meaning furniture has a similar orthography to its modern French counterpart. Within the context of the data, 'meuvables' is used in the sense of a will 'he gave hys [his] objects meuvables', since movable objects within a could often refer to pieces of furniture[6].

This could be viewed as an orthographic evolution of French into English, from meuvables ➔ movable due to the fact that they both have a common derivative of the Latin mobilis, meaning mobile[7]. This excludes 'meubles'

especially as English does not contain a similar lexeme. Surprisingly a different French lexeme introduced the noun furniture, a synonym for 'meubles' into the English vocabulary; originating from 'furnir' it potentially shows that the Resurgence of English prevented an overwhelming influx of French synonyms. Despite this, a potential cause of this borrowed lexicon could be as a result of code-switching, a practise evoked by frequent Anglo-French trade partnerships, consequently trade lead to lexical borrowings throughout the English language, ultimately leading to the amalgamation of both languages.[8]

'Verament' can be inferred as meaning 'vraiment', the French intensifier for very, used in the data as 'begynnyng verament' or as can be interpreted 'very beginning'. Due to their being no similarly derived lexeme in modern English it can be suggested that although this word was used in the fifteenth century its use dwindled into Modern English. The intensifier 'vraiment', a compounded neologism, derives from Old French and Latin[9]. The lack of this lexemes presence in Modern English suggests that, as a result of the 'Resurgence', less latinate lexemes were being borrowed in English, and more Germanic and Norse Lexis was on the rise. This is demonstrated clearly from the 'King List' in Figure 1 which shows the proportion of its lexical derivations.
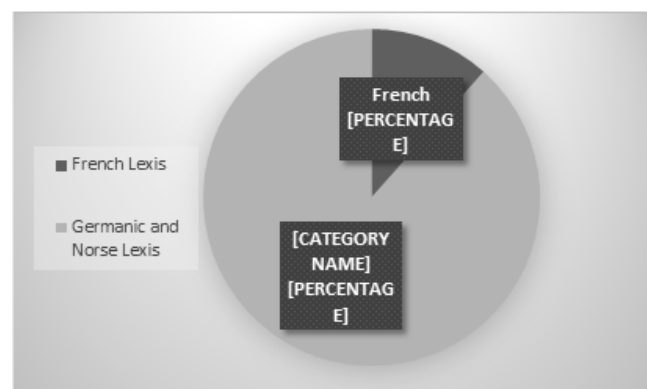

Figure 1

'Begynnyng verament', shows a prime example of code-switching, which could have become a natural convention amongst scribes due to the continual influence of French through trading and foreign relations. Although this was reduced as a result of the Resurgence, it could explain why so many features had relented. Another possibility is that the long exposure to French had caused many conventions of English to form in parallel to those of French.

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[5] "BBC - History - British History In Depth: The Ages Of English". Bbc.co.uk. N.p., 2014. Web. 20 Oct. 2016

[6] En.wiktionary.org. (2016). *meuble - Wiktionary*. [online] Available at: https://en.wiktionary.org/wiki/meuble [Accessed 7 Dec. 2016].

[7] Latin-dictionary.org. (2016). *mobilis meaning | English Latin Online Dictionary/A/6*. [online] Available at: http://www.latin-dictionary.org/English-Latin-Online-Dictionary/A/6/mobilis [Accessed 21 Oct. 2016].

[8] Library, British. "Trade And The English Language". *Bl.uk*. N.p., 2016. Web. 14 Dec. 2016.

[9] En.wiktionary.org. (2016). *vrai - Wiktionary*. [online] Available at: https://en.wiktionary.org/wiki/vrai [Accessed 16 Dec. 2016].

The evidence of the subsidence of French within the 'King List' could also suggest that the 'Great Vowel Shift' was not entirely triggered by the influx of French lexis. This phonological shift may have been inevitable with the rapid progression of English causing a necessity for pronunciation to change, an event which is described as only an English phenomenon.[10]

Addition of French-Derived Suffix

One Feature that is present throughout each section and verse is the addition of the suffix 'e' on a large quantity of lexemes in the data.

Town**e**	Thenn**e**	Wann**e**	Yer**e**	Day**e**
Sonn**e**	Ferm**e**	Yond**e**	Caan**e**	For**e**

Commonly featured within the French language the additional 'e' was used to show that the vowel of the previous syllable was long.[11] This came to be used frequently in Middle English on any word that was felt to have a long vowel in the first syllable. This is why the frequency of this French orthographical feature is so great in the 'King List'. At this time conventions in English had only just begun to be established by Chancery English, developed by the 15 century written usage of the clerks of Chancery in London, who prepared the king's documents[12]. Developed under Caxton, Chancery English became the foundations of a 'Standard English'. This however, was a limited start to English conventions and meant that previous French conventions still relented. Such conventions of French are demonstrated by the addition of the 'e' suffix.

The presence of the 'e' suffix could be seen as the establishment of pronunciation conventions within the English language. This marker aided literate citizens to differentiate their pronunciation according to the written morphological structures, which ultimately lead to a more standard method of pronunciation. The increased regularity of long vowel sounds in Middle English compared to French meant that the additional 'e' appeared more frequently in English rather than in French. This was because English was a Germanic language that featured stress on the vowels, therefore more lexemes, some not of French etymological heritage, had the French suffix to aid with pronunciation. This feature can be seen as one of the

main catalysts, in addition with French borrowings, leading to the Great Vowel Shift.[13] Although its influence may have been limited by the 'Resurgence of English'.

In contrast, the utilisation of French orthographic styles, such as this, meant that it gained authors prestige, in particular for the 'King List' it was essential as a large piece of poetry about the Kings of England to look professional as to be accepted and praised by its readers, who would most likely be of a higher class. 'It is now widely accepted that by the middle of the thirteenth century, at the latest, the ability to read was pretty general among nobles'[14]. Thus French was key to make a good impression upon the affluent nobility, who could have been potential benefactors or sponsors towards the career of the 'King List' author.

French Syntactic Methods and Rules

'Of Fraunce … of hir **y[there]** bore'

'At westmynstr William **y[there]** crowned'

'Att Agyngcourt he had a batayll **y[there]**'

Another feature of a grammatical, in particular syntactic nature, is the continuous use of 'y' as an adverbial pronoun. This is borrowed directly from the French use of 'y' as a substitute for a noun or noun phrase, which has the exact same use in Middle English. Je vais en France = j'y vais[15], this shows an example of the French use of this substitution; within the 'King List' this grammatical rule holds the exact same semantic quality and grammatical structure as the French original.

This marker aided literate citizens within the data can be interpreted as a direct borrowing of grammatical rules, since the lexeme 'there' is featured within the 'King List' and therefore 'y' has been used in the correct context of an adverbial pronoun. On the other hand, this could have been used as a form of abbreviation, due to 'y' requiring less characters than 'there'. This is highly relevant to the 'King List' as it is a fifteen verse document, and thus would have taken a long time to scribe, so authors would often find methods to shorten the time spent on it.

The convenience of 'y' as an abbreviation also has the added benefit of showing prestige, this is in parallel to the addition of 'e'. The ultimate successful and accurate use of

[10] Mastin, Luke. "The History Of English - Early Modern English (C. 1500 - C. 1800)". Thehistoryofenglish.com. N.p., 2011. Web. 2 Dec. 2016.

[11] Anon, (2016). [online] Available at: https://www.uni-due.de/SHE/HE_Vocabulary_French.htm [Accessed 26 Sep. 2016].

[12] "CHANCERY STANDARD." Concise Oxford Companion to the English Language. Encyclopedia.com. 8 Nov. 2016 http://www.encyclopedia.com.

[13] Thehistoryofenglish.com. (2016). *The History of English - Early Modern English (c. 1500 - c. 1800)*. [online] Available at: http://www.thehistoryofenglish.com/history_early_modern.html [Accessed 28 Sep. 2016].

[14] Given-Wilson, Chris. The English Nobility In The Late Middle Ages. 1st ed. London: Routledge, 1996. Print.

[15] Chevalier-Karfis, C. (2013). *How to Use the Pronoun Y in French - Learn French*. [online] French Today. Available at: http://www.frenchtoday.com/blog/how-to-use-the-pronoun-y-in-french [Accessed 28 Sep. 2016].

this grammatical feature also showed off a level of fluency by the author. Despite the author not being known, it can be postulated that they would be writing to the more literate and noble classes, and thus the perception of knowledge in correct French grammar would be essential to make a good impression upon the readership.

King List Example
one and twenty yere = 21 years

French Example
Vingt et un = twenty and one = 21

An additional feature of a French borrowed syntactic rule is the way numbers are expressed within the data. Unlike the additional 'y', the method of writing a French style syntax of numbers leans away from gaining prestige, and more towards the flow of writing and how it sounds aloud, in particular the since the 'King List' is written in a rhyming scheme. The sound of 'one and twenty yere' aloud, compared to 'twenty-one yeres' is noticeably more euphonic.

The idea of manipulating syntax to sound more euphonious can additionally be visible in the French language, syntax in French can often be re-ordered or grammatically altered to improve the fluency when spoken, similarly to the expression of numbers in the 'King List'. As shown by Melvyn Bragg 'English is designed to be spoken aloud'[16]. Consequently, the 'King List' required the necessity of euphony when spoken aloud, thus suitable syntax was of the upmost importance. Especially as its noble audience would be expectant of a professional structuring and a distinguishable elegance and euphony when spoken.

Conclusion

It is clear that from the 'King List' that there were many French influences upon Middle English, the most apparent were those of borrowings, not just lexical but also grammatical and phonological. The concentration of these borrowings, which make up less than a quarter of the 'King Lists' content suggests that the idea of the 'Resurgence of English' was indeed apparent in fifteenth century England. Although from this finding it could be suggested the 'Great Vowel Shift' was in fact a necessary event in the English Language and that the decreasing influence of French had little influence upon this phonological phenomenon. From what French influence can be seen in the 'King List', its uses were for that of prestige, writing convenience and the prosody of the text. The causes of this can be linked to the strong French heritage that had continued influence upon English, causing potential conventions to appear amongst the work of scribes. Further grounds for this undeniable

influence could be due to the trading relations with France, although evidence of the 'Resurgence' is concrete in the 'King List' trade continued ultimately undermining the full effect of this linguistic event. Consequently, French still persisted in the English Language, highlighted by the 'King List', it resulted in the undeniable fact that the Modern English lexicon contains millions French derivatives.

The complexity of this data highlighted some issues with research, especially since not all events can be confirmed but only hypothesised. The problem with accuracy and reliability with research also posed a problem, some sources used from the internet had no authors or came from a 'wiki' source, potentially meaning data was not as accurate or credible and thus could invalidate the evidence. To improve the accuracy of the investigation more in-depth research would need to be done, for example corroborating the 'King List' with a similar piece of data would make the conclusions more justified. The data itself also posed issues with transliteration as even a professional could not transliterate every word, thus meaning potential evidence could have been omitted from the data. The conclusions from the 'King List' were somewhat surprising, the expectations were that the influence of French would be greater, however the evidence highlighted that it was on the decline an outcome which was not expected. Yet the conclusion that the influence that were present in the 'King List' remained into Modern English was highly expectant.

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[16] *The Adventure of English*. (2003). [DVD] ITV: Melvyn Bragg.

Principal Moderator comments

The investigation

This project has clearly emerged from the candidate's deep interest in this area of study and it is particularly interesting to see the attentiveness with which the candidate has engaged with the data source.

AO1- 9 marks

The candidate has on the whole adopted an impressively academic register and has applied advanced technical terminology appropriately throughout. The piece reads as a cogent and sophisticated exploration of French influences on the English Language and the English resurgence. There has also been great care taken to systematically and logically order the content of each section. The analysis section is particularly well organised and sophisticated in its approach. Disappointingly, given the quality of the content and writing, the candidate has not very clearly expressed the aims of the investigation within the introduction, instead adopting an essay-like introduction on the background of the French and English language interplay where some extraneous detail further clouds what the investigation seeks to achieve. Furthermore the methodology does not really address what language features shall be focussed on. These omissions demonstrate that, though the candidate is clearly working at a very high level, they could still engage more with the structural features expected of an investigative report.

AO2 – 9 marks

What is perhaps most impressive about this investigation is the probing nature of the analysis – key features are drawn on to aid in the corroboration of the underpinning hypothesis and very astute and consistent judgements are made. There is a critical engagement with key concepts surrounding the area of study and the choice of theory is generally highly relevant. The only real limitation of the critical engagement with the theory is that in the early sections of the report the candidate does not explicitly explore how these theories underpin their own hypothesis and how such theories shaped what evidence they intended to look for. Some work could also be undertaken in ensuring that where citations are used they are more deeply analysed in relation to the data and underpinning hypothesis and not simply name-dropped (as they occasionally are).

AO3 – 8 marks

The candidate has invested in unpacking key contextual detail, and the level of information they provides certainly demonstrate a keen interest in this topic. While the context is certainly fascinating, unfortunately the candidate does not always show discernment in the details of context that they include – there is much included that is unnecessary, or at least not explicitly made relevant to the establishment of the hypothesis. This being said, there are a number of sophisticated uses of contextual information to aid in the probing of the issue – and the candidate has also shown the ability to explain how the contexts support what the data says, or to explore how the data seems to run counter to what might be expected .

'The Realme of Fraunce': An Investigation into French influences in the Middle English Chronological 'King List'

Introduction ~

The King List is a rhyming chronology of the Kings of England dating to c.1432. Beginning at William the conqueror and ending with Henry VI, it gives crude visual representations with descriptions of their reigns. Written in Middle English, fifty years after Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales*, it shows many features of French influence. England at this time was highly linked to France, Henry was proclaimed King of France, his wife, Margaret of Anjou was of the French royal family Valois-Anjou. French was the language of the nobility used as a form of prestige, however the Resurgence of English meant French influence was diminishing. Yet the influence of French has been seen as a catalyst for The Great Vowel Shift, in which the pronunciation of English changed dramatically. Writing styles such as cursive script, writing without taking the pen off the page, showed scribes used methods to reduce writing time.

Methodology ~

Sampling the data was necessary, being 10"6 in length containing fifteen verses meant that a smaller sample was needed to focus the investigation. Three sections were chosen based on position in text; verse one, verse seven and verse fourteen were chosen. These have been pictured below. Transliteration of the 'King List' was the next essential step to succeed in comprehending and understanding the text. The low legibility of the cursive script meant that transliteration was key, as potential for French features to be missed was increased by the lack of comprehension. To determine which features were French, each word was corresponded to the *Oxford English Dictionary* for its etymology. Using journals and websites was crucial to discover whether the features identified had been born out of French influence.

Main Findings ~

❖ **Conventions** of French had been used frequently. Examples such as **'y'** adverbial pronoun.
❖ French features used to **express pronunciation**. additional **'e' suffix** showed that the previous vowel sound was long. These pronunciation markers can be seen as a catalyst to the **'Great Vowel Shift'**.
❖ French used as a form of **'short-cut'** similar to that of cursive script, e.g. 'y' used instead of writing 'there'.
❖ French used as a form of **prestige**, gave the author **credibility** among its learned and high class readers.
❖ French **syntactic methods** showed fluency and made the text **euphonic** when read aloud. E.g. 'one and twenty yere' = 'vingt et un'
❖ 'King List' demonstrates the **evolution of French** into English and the slow process of the **'Resurgence of English'** and the consequent subsidence of French as the language of power. The pie chart above shows how much French had subsided in comparison to English.

French
12%

Germanic and Norse
Lexis
88%

❖ This data supports the idea that there was a 'Resurgence of English' at this time, with 46 out of 397 words originating from French.
❖ Potentially sways from French as being an influence that caused the 'Great Vowel Shift'. This shift in pronunciation may have been inevitable.

Limitations ~

❖ The length of this document that meant that it was inevitable for some features to be missed.
❖ The 'King List' only shows one authors use of language, this one document cannot represent the whole state of the English Language during the time period.

Conclusions ~

❖ French was subsiding in the English language, the theory of the **'Resurgence of English'** seems to be applicable to the 'King List'
❖ French still formed a part of English, an influence being that of Anglo-French trade links the 'King List' shows one view of the evolution of French into English how some words were continued into English and others were left behind.
❖ French used within English was potentially used as a 'short-cut' or form of short-hand, which made writing long documents such as the 'King List', quicker to write.
❖ French, when it was used, may have been a form of prestige used by scribes to impress their likely noble audience, who would have most likely had French roots or would have been proficient in the language.

Principal Moderator comments

The poster

AO5 – 7 marks

This candidate has certainly adopted a stimulating visual representation of the data, and care has clearly been taken to engage the 'new' audience. Each of the sections is easy to identify and the content contained in each has been (mostly) well judged. It is particularly pleasing to see how the analysis has been presented as key findings as this demonstrates discernment in terms of what information should be prioritised and an awareness of how to summarise the information for this audience. The key areas where the content is perhaps less well selected are the introduction (where again the aims of the project are not explicitly addressed) and the evaluation section which is titled Limitations (it's important to note the evaluation does not mean identifying weaknesses alone).

Overall

33/40 = Low Level 5

PLEASE NOTE THAT SOME IMAGES HAD TO BE CHANGED FOR COPYRIGHT REASONS FROM THE ORIGINAL.

An Investigation into the Use of Language Techniques and 'Spin' in BBC News Reports on the 9/11 Attacks

Candidate B

Word count (excluding quotes, footnotes etc.) – 2,653

Contents

Introduction

"The world trade centre in New York is on fire after being hit by two passenger planes"

"Smoke and flames are billowing from both towers"

"The side of one of the towers was blown out in a ball of flames"

"Some reports say one of the planes had been hijacked before it crashed"

"Those reports **could point to some kind of terrorist attack***" [17]*

On September 11th, 2001, an event occurred which has gone down in history as one of the most horrific and catastrophic attacks on humanity. The shocking event shook the world, and prompted immediate global coverage of the attack on all news platforms.

The purpose of a news broadcast is to present as-it-happens news stories with up to date information. The BBC is widely regarded as the most informative and impartial current affairs broadcaster in the world[18], covering every story from local news to global catastrophes. Author of *Language in the News* Roger Fowler wrote:

'As viewers of the television, we readily assume that The Nine O Clock News[19] consists of faithful reports of events that happened 'out there' in the world beyond our immediate experience'[20].

It is clear then that we rely upon the news heavily, and our attitudes are easily influenced by the language used, particularly by an authority figure like a BBC newsreader. However, Danuta Reah[21] adds:

'Why are news stories referred to in a way that gives them the status of fictional accounts? They carry the implications of interpretation, elaboration, the creation of a narrative.'

To look at the impact of spin (i.e. the interpretation, elaboration and creation of narratives), I am studying both a 'breaking news' broadcast, which was aired at 12:00 midday on September 11th 2001 on BBC1, and a BBC News at Ten report which aired the evening of the same day.

Methodology

The data used in this investigation was retrieved from YouTube; however, both would have originally aired on TV on BBC1 live. Since the focus of the investigation is on the power of language to shape perception, secondary sources were drawn on. Some of these were:

Norman Fairclough's Language and Power, Roger Fowler's *Language in the Press* and Dwight Bolinger's *Language the Loaded Weapon*. These specific sources were complemented by the broader language information I gained from David Crystal's *Encyclopaedia of the English Language* and the websites I found.

The investigation has been divided into the following sections:

1. **Lexis and Semantics**
    - The manipulation of words for a specific effect
2. **Grammar and Discourse**
    - The phrasing and structure of the reporter's speech
3. **Pragmatics**
    - Ideology and power in the press

Analysis

1. Lexis and Semantics

One key feature of both the broadcasts is the use of powerful verbs which are included for different reasons. In the Breaking News broadcast, lexis in the form of verbs like 'pouring''crashed''billowing''gaping' and 'smashed' are used which describe literal eye witness accounts of the event. This contrasts with the verbs used in the BBC News at Ten, where more intent and aggression is implied, in a higher order, lower frequency style. These verbs include:

Destroy	(Blair) **condemns**
Struck	**Mocking**
(terror) **spread**	(terrorists) **attack**
Paralysed	Hijacked (planes) **smash** into
Collapse	**Trapped**
Explodes	**Smouldering**

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17 BBC Radio One 2:30pm newsbeat broadcast, 11/09/01

18 BBC Editorial guidelines – impartiality, principles and content etc., http://www.bbc.co.uk/editorialguidelines/guidelines/impartiality

19 I have used BBC News at Ten, but the reference here to the Nine O Clock News is intended as a generic BBC example, therefore applies to my data.

20 *Language in the News*, Roger Fowler, Routledge 1991

21 *The Language of Newspapers*, Danuta Reah, Routledge 1998

This creates a semantic field of attack and threat, which is more hostile than the verbs used in the Breaking News broadcast which describe a 'possible air crash'. On the BBC News at Ten, the verbs 'mocking' and 'condemn' connote accusations and claims. The Breaking News report still holds powerful descriptions of the horrific damage done to the buildings, but as the attack was so recent there is little information about the cause of the crash – many still believed it to be an accident, which is why verbs like 'attack' are not used.

Fairclough (1995) created the theory of narrativisation[22], where 'dramatic aspects of an event become the primary focus instead of background context or political issues'. This applies particularly to the Breaking News broadcast but also the BBC News at Ten broadcast, because the powerful descriptions are not actually very informative about the context of the issue. The information that is given is vague, such as the phrases 'international terrorists' and 'the only estimate of fatalities is that they could run into many thousands'. This is both due to the fact that the exact information about the terrorists was not known at the time of broadcast, and also, as Fairclough describes, the graphic nature of the impact is emphasised above the facts and figures.

Another key lexical feature is the use of the word 'terrorist'. According to the Oxford English Dictionary:

'The term now usually refers to a member of a clandestine or expatriate organization aiming to coerce an established government by acts of violence against it or its subjects.'

The word comes from Latin and French origins[23] and its usage has peaked in the past ten years, rising steeply during the years surrounding the 9/11 attacks[24], as have the words 'terrorism' and 'hijack'.
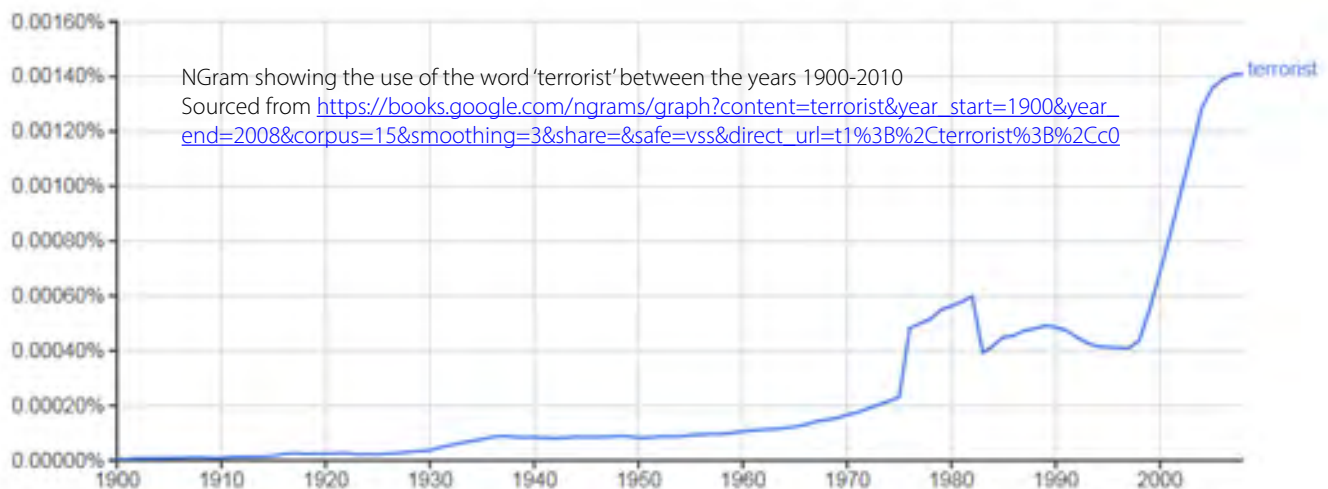
In particular, the word 'terrorist' is collocated in different ways in the BBC News at Ten broadcast, such as 'terrorist barbarism''international terrorists''terrorists attack''terrorists also struck'. This repetition of this key phrase reinforces the importance of the root word 'terror' and furthermore how frightening and all-pervasive the event was, for the victims and the world.

The Breaking News broadcast does not contain the word 'terrorist' and only describes the event as a 'plane crash', yet to assign responsibility. However, in the build up to the BBC News at Ten report, the journalists had time to craft the lexis used to present the event and chose to include these words. As Roger Fowler said:

'People work with mental categories for sorting experiences, a socially constructed mental pigeon hole, e.g. 'mother''patriot''businessman''terrorist''foreigner''Tory'.'[25]

The repetition of these key lexemes affects the way viewers perceive the event, which demonstrates linguistic determination on a global scale.

Another feature of the News at Ten report is the semantic field of injury, where the terms, 'paralysed''heart' and 'spread' all mimic the words used during a medical diagnosis. This combines our views of the human body with the physical attack by terrorists. The heart, for example is known universally as the most important body part, the central beat that keeps us alive. It is also known as the source of love and emotion. The 'heart' is repeated in the broadcast to show how this event combines the two – a physical attack has occurred where thousands lost their lives or became injured, but the emotional and moral attack on humanity links to the heartache felt by those involved. This complex semantic field demonstrates the degree of spin being applied to the event in the form of an emotional narrative.

NGram showing the use of the word 'terrorist' between the years 1900-2010
Sourced from https://books.google.com/ngrams/graph?content=terrorist&year_start=1900&year_end=2008&corpus=15&smoothing=3&share=&safe=vss&direct_url=t1%3B%2Cterrorist%3B%2Cc0

[22] Teaching Film, Television and Media (website) http://www.tc.umn.edu/~rbeach/teachingmedia/module10/3a.htm, Viewed 9/8/16

[23] Etymonline, http://www.etymonline.com/index.php?term=terrorist Viewed 13/10/16

[24] Google NGram viewer https://books.google.com/ngrams/graph?content=terrorist&year_start=1900&year_end=2010&corpus=15&smoothing=3&share=&safe=vss&direct_url=t1%3B%2Cterrorist%3B%2Cc0, Viewed 13/10/16

[25] *Language in the News* by Roger Fowler, Routledge, 1991

One contrasting feature of the Breaking News bulletin, which clearly shows the lack of knowledge and certainty in the information being provided, is the hedging and mitigation. The newsreader says, 'we have serious news of a major <u>possible</u> air crash' 'a plane <u>appears</u> to have crashed' 'there has been a plane crash in the um (.) morning time' 'the result of a plane crash it's <u>believed</u>'. The BBC has a duty to ensure all information given in the news is accurate and unbiased, as their commissioning regulations state:

'When dealing with controversial subjects concerning the BBC, our reporting must remain duly impartial, as well as accurate and fair.' [26]

The newsreader is obliged to slot in these disclaimers to ensure that no-one can blame the BBC for biased or inaccurate coverage.

On the other hand, by the time the BBC News at Ten report came on air, the narrative had evolved far enough for the events to be described in metaphorical terms: 'amid the nightmare'. The Oxford English Dictionary definition of 'nightmare' is:

'A feeling of suffocation or great distress experienced during sleep. Now: A bad dream producing these or similar sensations; an oppressive, frightening, or unpleasant dream.'

Whilst the event was a disaster for New York and America, it was not a physical 'nightmare'. However, the metaphor communicates the level of turmoil in America (and beyond) in a clear way – the majority of society, from any age or social group, will be familiar with the expression. This description was deliberately chosen alongside 'catastrophic', 'horrendous' and 'more an act of war' to portray the scale of the attack on America. Whilst this expression might seem hyperbolic, in this case it was not. This attack was very similar to a nightmare – it was unexpected and frightening in its implications of the shattering of the West's sense of security.

2. Grammar and Discourse

The Breaking News broadcast has an informal grammatical structure. Many non-fluency features break up the flow of the conventionally neat, tidy and pacey news report structure. Examples of these are fillers like '*it's believed that uh', 'there has been a plane crash in the um (.) morning time' and 'pictures as I said of the World Trade Centre'. There are also pauses and repetition such as 'major possible air crash…… plane appears to have crashed……result of a plane crash…... fire as a result of a plane crash' throughout the broadcast. Contractions like 'that's' 'it's' and 'we're'* give the speech a more informal, rushed feel and indicate the relative lack of

planning and scripting. The higher number of pauses in this broadcast result in a jolted and broken up feel against the flow of the BBC News at Ten script. These non-fluency features contrast with the formality of conventional broadcasts, which sets this particular report apart from regular lunchtime news slots on BBC1. This mirrors the severity and uniqueness of this event.

The discourse structure of the BBC News at Ten report is split into two. The first part of the broadcast is the typical elliptical bulleted headlines which capture the key words and phrases of the event, and the second part contains fuller sentences with more detail. The use of ellipsis in the opening of the bulletin, for example 'Panic and the certainty that casualties are horrendous' is similar to the ellipsis seen in newspaper headlines. As Martin Conboy[27] has said:

'Headlines have to briefly summarize the news, attract attention, and indicate the style of the paper/show to the audience.'

The method of opening the programme with bulleted headline points gives the programme a sense of urgency, which emphasises the importance of this event (however it must be noted that this is a common feature of BBC News programmes).

The BBC News at Ten report also includes a modal verb to emphasise the high numbers who potentially lost their life or gained a life changing injury from the attack. In the phrase 'the only estimate of fatalities (.) is that they could run into many thousands', the verb 'could' implies that there is a possibility for thousands to be affected by the attack, and seems more certain than the modal auxiliary verbs 'may' or 'might'. This suggests ambiguity because not all the facts would have been determined at this point in time, yet there is a very real potential for huge losses of life. This ambiguity is reinforced by the phrase 'the only estimate' which further suggests that nothing is for sure yet.

In the Breaking News broadcast, several phrases and words are repeated frequently, for example the words 'Trade Centre' were mentioned six times throughout the broadcast. This could be due to the smaller amount of preparation time which leaves the newsreader having to improvise the script with little information. Alternatively, it could be repetition for effect, where the newsreader wants to emphasise the importance of the towers' purpose – the attacks were not just aimed at two tall buildings, but two tall buildings with international importance to the country involved. In the BBC News at Ten report, less repetition of the key nouns is used however there are more synonyms for the World Trade Centre, as it is referred to as, 'New York's tallest buildings' 'The Centre of New York' 'America's two tallest buildings' and 'heart of America'. This relexicalisation provides more varied utterances for the listener to hear which gives the broadcast a professional feel.

[26] BBC Editorial guidelines – impartiality, principles and content etc http://www.bbc.co.uk/editorialguidelines/guidelines/impartiality, Viewed 11/8/16
[27] The Language of the News by Martin Conboy Routledge, 2007

Another grammatical feature in the Breaking News broadcast is the interesting use of person pronouns. In the bulletin, 2nd Person direct address is used to clearly communicate with the viewer. The reporter says phrases like 'as you can see' which gives the bulletin an interactional feel. This illustrates the newsreader inviting the viewer to watch the pictures and events unfold, which creates informality. There are some 1st person inclusive pronouns like 'that's the information we've got' 'all we know at this moment' and 'for viewers who are joining us'. This gives the illusion that the report is building a relationship with the people watching on TV, which would be an instance of Synthetic Personalisation[28]. In this case, however you could argue that the use of the pronoun 'we' is just a unification of the production team. 'All we know' is not referring to 'we' as the reporter and viewer combined, it is instead referring to the team who gathered the information and presented it, as a disclaimer. This is *not* a common feature of conventional news broadcasting, especially the BBC. Utterances like 'as we come on air' reflect the sense that the producers were caught off guard. In the *Encyclopaedia of the English Language*, David Crystal states, 'News reports are the combination of many contributors'[29] and the pronoun 'we' refers to them. The use of the words 'joining us', however, is an effective way of including the viewers and making them feel that whatever the tragedy, the BBC news team will be there to present the coverage immediately.

3. Pragmatics

The BBC hold the responsibility of presenting global news to a global audience, however its primary audience would be the viewers in the UK, which could explain the occurrence of the utterance, 'Britain imposes drastic security measures (.) as Blair condemns the terrorist barbarism'. This line focuses the news onto the impact it has on our society in the UK, which suits the audience. The international priority of events would be different, and any other country or broadcaster would not classify the British Prime Minister's statement as significant enough to include in the headline statement at the start of the broadcast. The fact that 9/11 was such an unexpected violation of humanity meant that the attack was not only on Americans but on all democracies and all free societies, particularly the UK, as an ally of the USA. This also suggests

that the Government and Prime Minister's views and actions are considered very important to the viewers of BBC News.

Whilst the BBC may attempt to be completely neutral, somehow the news story will slightly lean towards a particular viewpoint or that of the creators of the broadcasts. As well as individual viewpoints, more broad ideologies in society at the time will impact the language used. An ideology can be defined as:

'A world view, a system of values, attitudes and beliefs which an individual, group or society holds to be true or important; these are shared by a culture or society about how that society should function'.[30]

The global viewpoint regarding the actions of terrorism is that they horrifically damage free societies. However, this idea was not exploited in the Breaking News Broadcast because blame was yet to be placed since the event was so recent – terrorism was not yet a consideration. America is, and was, the world's leading democracy, having never been invaded since becoming the 'United States'; yet in the BBC News at Ten broadcast, the terrorists 'struck with remarkable ease' which emphasises the surprise felt by the world that anyone had dared to threaten the most powerful democratic nation[31].

The symbolic nature of targeting the Trade Centre, the Pentagon (the United States Department of Defence Headquarters) and the White House[32] was an attack on trade, defence and government. 9/11 seemed to be an attack on freedom and independence instead of the specific city or country. This was what America represented and the towers were a symbol of America's power, particularly its leading international authority.

Conclusion

Danuta Reah's comments on news stories can be applied to the coverage of the 9/11 attacks. She questions why news stories are referred to in a similar way to fictional accounts. In terms of interpretation, we understand from the two broadcasts that within a very small amount of time, a 'plane crash' had become an international terrorist atrocity. Elaboration occurred when the attack was described as

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[28] This is a theory, developed by Norman Fairclough, suggesting that the media attempt to build bonds and relationships with the consumer through using direct address. This is more commonly identified in advertising, where a brand will directly address the consumer in order to make their product feel more personal.

[29] *The Cambridge Encyclopaedia of the English Language* – David Crystal, Cambridge University Press, 2003

[30] Teaching Film, Television and Media http://www.tc.umn.edu/~rbeach/teachingmedia/module10/3a.htm, Viewed 9/8/16

[31] Democracy can be defined as: '*Government by the people; esp. a system of government in which all the people of a state or polity are involved in making decisions about its affairs, typically by voting to elect representatives to a parliament or similar assembly*' - OED Definition of 'democracy' - http://www.oed.com/view/Entry/49755?redirectedFrom=democracy#eid

[32] The fourth plane, which was hijacked, was believed to be targeting the White House, residence and workplace of the Head of US Government, the President. However, it was brought down by passengers who attacked the hijackers in an attempt to regain control. The plane crashed in Pennsylvania.

[33] An example of the use of footage and reports from the 9/11 attacks is the documentary: '*102 Minutes That Changed America*', shown in recent years to mark the anniversary of the attack.

'an act of war' affecting the whole world, as well as the metaphorical comparisons to a 'nightmare'. In particular, Britain imposed 'drastic security measures' as a result of the attack, which shows that one of the BBC's priorities is to directly address the British Public. A narrative was created when the broadcasts told viewers that evil outsiders had violated the home of democracy, free will, the American Dream, and independence. Through journalistic spin and language manipulation, a 'possible accident' became a 'deliberate attack' and this outlook was transmitted around the world under the trustworthy brand of the BBC News.

The broadcasts are still used today[33] to provide an insight into the shocking and harrowing events that still scar America, democracy, and the world today and influence our views on the future.

Principal Moderator comments

A valid and well-considered topic of investigation, though more could have been done to outline the aims of the project more clearly in the introduction section.

AO1 – 7 marks

The candidate has generally adopted an appropriately academic register and applies relevant terminology accurately. The investigation has been well organised, utilising a title page and contents page indicates that the candidate has engaged with the conventions of a report. The candidate has clearly thought carefully about how to utilise format features to organise each section of the report and this ensures that the report follows a very clear structure. There is a slight imbalance in terms of word allocation, and some issues in relation to what emphasis is placed on the content in some sections. For example, in the introduction much energy is invested in exploring the nature of the focus event (the 9/11 attacks) rather than expressing the aims of the project – i.e to explore how language is utilised within broadcasts on news issues – or how 'spin' is used to construct a narrative of newsworthy events. Similarly, the methodology is rather brief, and does not really engage with how and why the data sources were selected in order to explore how news narratives are constructed around significant events. Furthermore, any evaluative comment has been completely omitted. For the reasons outlined, the level for this AO is limited to a low level 4.

AO2 – 8 marks

The candidate demonstrates an assured critical engagement with the language features evidenced within the data sources – the analysis is detailed, thorough and at times astute. There is certainly an engagement with language theories, in relation to both how language is utilised within news broadcasts and in relation to broader language usages. Though the level of analysis is strong in this piece, there are instances where the quality of the broader discussion becomes less focused as the candidate makes irrelevant assertions about the nature of the 9/11 attacks, rather than how the narrative of the attacks is shaped. Furthermore, whereas citations are generally appropriate, they are not always so, and on occasion the use of theory could be better imbedded into the discussion. Therefore as a result of these flaws, there is some limitations in judgement that ultimately undermines the quality of the critical engagement with the theories and data source.

AO3 – 7 marks

The candidate has certainly engaged with contexts in relation to the nature of BBC broadcasts, the process of preparing news broadcasts and the nature of the attacks and their place within a broader narrative of the 'terror' within our modern setting. In many cases contexts are well explored and linked well to the analysis of the data. However, there are also occasions where the contexts could more seamlessly be utilised and more thoroughly explored in terms of how they shape meaning – for instance the Oxford Dictionary definitions of certain terms are not necessarily useful in aiding the analysis.

CAND B

An Investigation into the Use of Language Techniques and 'Spin' in BBC News Reports on the 9/11 Attacks

On September 11th, 2001, an event occurred which has since gone down in history as one of the most horrific and catastrophic attacks on humanity. It shook the world, and prompted immediate global coverage of the attack on all news platforms. This investigation was a study of how the producers of BBC News used language and 'spin' to present the news of the 9/11 terrorist attack in America.

I studied both a 'Breaking News' broadcast, which was aired at 12:00 midday on September 11th 2001 on BBC1, and a BBC News at Ten report which aired the evening of the same day. The overall aim of the investigation was to explore how linguistic techniques were used to describe the attack and how they differed depending on the time of broadcast.

- Data retrieved from YouTube (however, both would have originally aired on BBC1 Live).
- Transcripts written up, and linguistic features analysed.
- Secondary sources were drawn on. Examples include Norman Fairclough's *Language and Power*, Roger Fowler's *Language in the Press*, Dwight Bolinger's *Language the Loaded Weapon*, David Crystal's *Encyclopaedia of the English Language*, and the BBC Editorial Guidelines.
- Split into three main sections: Lexis and Semantics (the manipulation of words for a special effect), Grammar and Discourse (the phrasing and structure of the reporter's speech), and Pragmatics (ideology and power in the press).

Repetition of the word 'Terrorist' and 'terror' in the BBC News at Ten broadcast – this "pigeon holes" the event into the viewer's mental filing system.

This Ngram shows the use of the word 'terrorist' and clearly indicates a sharp rise in its frequency in the mid-2000s, most likely due to the 9/11 attacks.
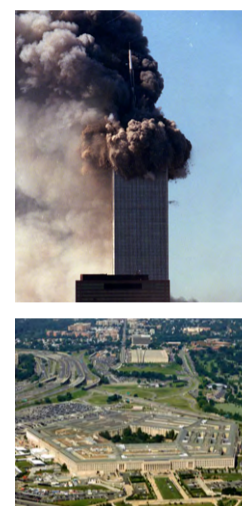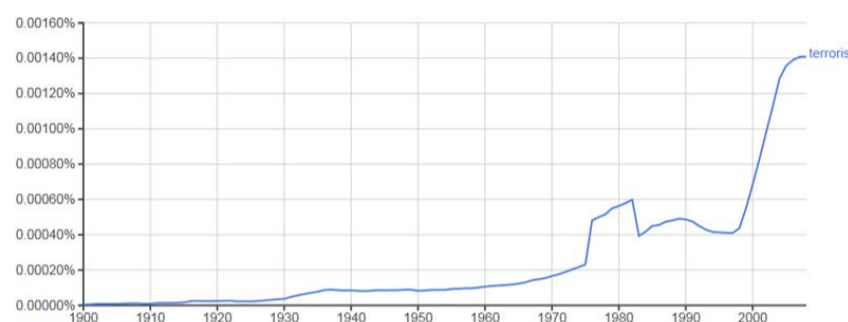
The symbolic nature of targeting the Trade Centre, the Pentagon and the White House was an attack on trade, defence and government.

Fairclough 1995, Theory of Narrativisation

'dramatic aspects of an event become the primary focus instead of background context or political issues'

The primary audience for BBC News programs would be in Britain, which is why target phrases are included, for example, 'tonight Britain imposes drastic security measures (.) as Blair condemns the terrorist barbarism'.

BBC News Live - Breaking News
11th September 2001, 8:54am

As we come on air (.) we have serious news of a major possible air crash in the United States (.) a plane appears to have crashed into one of New York's tallest buildings (.) the world (.) trade centre (1) as you can see those are (.) pictures of smoke (.) pouring out of a gaping hole (.) in the upper floors of the world trade centre (1) it is in the downtown area of Manhattan and is one of the most (.) heavily populated office buildings in New York (4) all we know at this moment is that uh (1) there has been a plane crash in the um (2) in the morning time (.) in New York (.) the plane (.) smashed into one of the twin towers (.) of the New York trade centre (.) about half an hour ago that's the (.) information that we've got (1) and you can see the smoke and flames billowing from the building (.) one eye witness said that it was a twin engine plane (.) possibly a seven three seven (.) which flew straight into the world trade centre (2) it's believed that uh some bits of the plane may still be embedded in the building (1) for viewers who are just joining us at the top of the hour (.) we're watching pictures of um (.) smoke billowing out of the world trade centre (.) in New York (1) the result of a plane crash it's believed which took place about half an hour ago in New York (.) an eye witness said there was a huge explosion (1) they thought in fact (.) that the blast had come from inside (1) pictures as I said of the World Trade Centre on fire as a result of a plane crash

BBC News at Ten
9/11/2001 News Report

Terrorists attack the heart of America with *catastrophic* loss of life (1) hijacked planes smash into and destroy New York's tallest buildings (1) both towers of the World Trade Centre collapse with thousands trapped (1) another plane explodes on the Pentagon mocking America's defensive might (1) in the streets (.) panic and the certainty that casualties are horrendous (.) tonight Britain imposes drastic security measures (.) as Blair condemns the terrorist barbarism

JINGLE

Good evening America came under attack today from international terrorists on a scale that made it (.) more an act of war (.) the centre of New York is still smouldering with America's two tallest buildings in ruins (.) terrorists also struck with remarkable ease at the heart of America's defence (.) the Pentagon (1) also (.) in Washington (.) other government buildings (.) symbols of America's power (.) were emptied as the terror spread (1) air traffic is paralysed (.) coast to coast all key installations are on high alert (.) and amid the nightmare (1) the only estimate of fatalities (.) is that they could run into many thousands

'smash'
'destroy'
'smouldering'
'exploded'
'struck'
'trapped'

Terrorist: *'The term now usually refers to a member of a clandestine or expatriate organization aiming to coerce an established government by acts of violence against it or its subjects.'*   – Oxford English Dictionary

The BBC News at Ten report was broadcast hours after the event meaning time had passed, allowing more information to be gathered and the script had been crafted more carefully, resulting in higher level features like metaphors, such as 'amid the nightmare'. In contrast, the Breaking News broadcast aired just minutes after the attack and therefore the language was improvised, which explains the presence of fillers and hedges such as 'possible' 'appears to' and 'it's believed'.

'Terror spread'
'Heart of America'
'Paralysed'
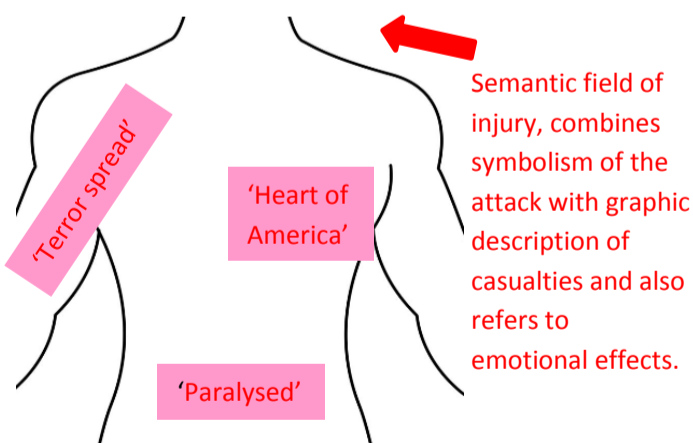
Semantic field of injury, combines symbolism of the attack with graphic description of casualties and also refers to emotional effects.

Breaking News	BBC News at Ten
Informal grammatical structure	*Organised structure in two clear parts*
2nd Person pronouns	*Modal Verb 'could'*
Repetition of key noun phrase 6 times	*Synonyms and relexicalisation*

Conclusions

The investigation has concluded in agreement with Dantua Reah's comments on news stories – she argues they are given a similar status to fictional accounts with 'interpretation, elaboration, the creation of a narrative'. Through journalistic spin and language manipulation, a 'possible accident' became a 'deliberate attack' and this outlook was transmitted around the world under the trustworthy brand of the BBC News.

Evaluation

Strengths of the investigation include the insights into the production of news programmes including broadcasting guidelines, as well as the contribution of an Ngram to add to the understanding of how the word 'terrorist' influences out thoughts.

If I were to improve the investigation, I would have selected longer pieces of data and tried to transcript more of each broadcast, to enable me to prove that the features I had identified were being used consistently throughout the broadcast. Furthermore, I could consider other channels and broadcasters to widen the investigation, or perhaps study how this news was presented in newspapers, online or through documentaries and the I

Principal Moderator comments

The Poster

A05 – 6 marks

The candidate has clearly thought carefully about visual tools that they can utilise to engage the new audience and maximise on the poster format. Many of the visual tools do indeed, provide illumination on the topic. Most key sections have been covered, and there are clear dividers between the sections – though use of headings for all of the sections would be useful to act as signposts for the reader. The analysis section, while visually interesting is rather hard to follow and a reader does have to work hard to draw out the implications of the data that is provided – greater clarity could be offered in this section. It is key to remember that though visual aids can be used, they should supplement, rather than replace, key findings within the analysis.

Overall

Total marks - 28/40 = Mid Level 4

PLEASE NOTE THAT SOME IMAGES HAD TO BE CHANGED FOR COPYRIGHT REASONS FROM THE ORIGINAL

Language differences between male and female presenters in interviews'

Candidate C

Introduction

The broadcasting industry I personally find is one of the most fascinating,exciting and interesting ways of showing individual's true personalities and is a exceptional way of keeping up to date with current affairs. As I am hopefully in the future going to pursue a career in this industry, I thought investigating the way in which language differs between male and female presenters would be an extremely interesting topic to cover, and is the reason as to why I have chosen to analyse this for my coursework.

I will personally collect all four of these interview transcripts and compare the grammar,lexis,semantics,grammar and theoretical links to produce an in depth analysis which will highlight key information regarding the two genders differences in interview situations.

Hypothesis

I predict my findings will include:

- Men use strategic language features to gain power in conversational situations

- Women's talk among other women is co-operative

- Men see language as a means of asserting dominance

- Women are active listeners and use minor interjections

Methodology

When collecting my research I picked all four different interviews to enable a clear difference can be shown between the two genders, also so a comparison can be completed with the data to show an obvious trend.

Firstly I started by reading, watching and listening to as many interviews as I possibly could regarding the research for my analysis, to provide as much background knowledge for myself in terms of styles and structures of interviews,to then go on to select the very finest of interviews to include in this analysis.

Next I carefully picked interviews which categorised the different genders into different situations to highlight a

clear divide into changes, for example a male interviewing the same and opposite gender then the corresponding concept for the women.

Gender and power are the two main categories I am going to analyse, as I predict they will show a huge difference in terms of the information that is collected, and portray a clear idea to either confirm or refute my hypothesis.

I chose interview situations for my analysis as I feel this is the only way of showing natural use of language by both genders and a real variation of features employed.

The genre of the interviews were taken into consideration, I opted for a more controversial interview lead by Kay Burley,a political interview (Paxman), and two quite relaxed and chatty conversations (Lorraine and Nick Grimshaw). These all show a wide range of mixed situations and topics which I consider makes for an interesting analysis.

All transcripts were produced by listening to the interviews from the internet source 'Youtube', and transcribing the key parts of each conversation that included the most interaction within the interviews onto a word document then ready to print off. Finally key language features were highlighted and annotated ready to analyse.

Analysis

Lorraine interviewing Laura Whitmore on the Brit Awards and her occupation

Date 23rd February 2016

An interview with Lorraine Kelly (56) on her own morning chat who is interviewing Laura Whitmore (31) an Irish TV presenter chatting about the up and coming Brit Awards.

Throughout the whole of the interview with fellow female presenter Laura Whitmore, shows a very co-operative,accommodating personality which can be seen through her use of chosen lexis. This starts with many Empty adjectives applied to soften and add friendly elements to the sentences for example ' Amazing ' 'fun' which don't add any particularly meaning to the content but just portrays her as a more friendly individual, from my

research women tend to use more of these adjectives than men, as also confirmed within Robin Lakoffs theory. More examples of Lorraine making a more relaxed feeling in the interview is when she applies her own special lexicon such as 'frock'. Furthermore the informality within this interview is clear from the outset due to Lorraine avoiding using a definite article 'the' for example 'this Brit Awards' which gives a hugely informal, relaxed feel and as if she is trying to make it sound like not that big of a deal.

Downwards convergence is prominent throughout a lot of this interview as this could be utilised to try and impress Laura and to be on the same level as her as Lorraine knows she is used to carrying out interview herself being a fellow presenter, and highlights the accommodation theory. But this could also be to close the age gap between them both.

'Women speak less time and are less likely to interrupt' is a statement from Ann Weatherall's theory which is certainly shown in this interview by Lorraine, she is happy to listen to what Laura has to say and only ask questions when is needed.

This leads onto turn taking, there is a constant equally balanced amount of conversation within this interview which shows both women's politeness which may be because they are the same gender but also highlights the knowledge of how interviews should be carried out.

Finally, stated by the theorist Christine Howe 'women are more active listeners'. They use minor interjections ,such as 'uh huh' and 'ooh' known as back channeling. This is supported in this interview as Lorraine says 'Ooh good idea' which shows her both agreeing with her idea and complimenting Laura the interviewee.

Kay Burley's interview with Alton Towers parks chief executive

Date: 11th June 2015

Next is a formal and controversial interview lead by Kay Burley a English television newsreader and presenter (55), interviewing the Alton towers Chief Executive following the rollercoaster crash at the theme park which left four seriously injured, one of whom had her leg amputated. This interview was labelled as highly charged and Burley was seen grilling the executive, some also questioned whether Burley was being given a harder time over the interview because she was a woman.

Viewers described Burley's style of interviewing as 'grilling' and 'brutal'. This started with Burley employing many interrogative pronouns 'wh' As she really tried to extract as much information from the interviewee as possible for

example ' Why not?' 'what has happened' this is almost a form of interrogation to force him to explain himself and what he can do the help the situation.

Most of the sentences formed by Burley are of an exclamatory mood, which shows her anger towards whom she is interviewing 'potentially lost a limb you won't tell us if they have have or not but from what you say' and 'i'm sure they're not interested in your sympathy' within these statements Burley is trying to create conflict and argue with the subject which refutes Tannen's theory as she said 'Men will argue whereas women try to find a middle ground'.

In terms of lexical choices Burley chooses very wisely within her interview, starting with the oxymoron in the form of 'fantastic''sympathy' in the same sentence which are used to highlight the change in which the crash had on the victims lives to the Chief Executive and creates a more intense and shocking mood to the interview.

Burley comes across as a well educated women when using hypercorrect grammar in the form of 'appalled' and 'adequate' in the same sentence .Lakoff's theory can be related to here as she said 'Women use hypercorrect grammar and pronunciation which is English prestige grammar and clear enunciation'. Demonstrative pronouns such as 'this' and 'that' provide a sense of certainty and clarity she is portraying to the interviewee these have been used in both women presenters and is an occurring theme throughout.

The main mood created by Burley within the interview is certainly competitive as her attempt of gaining power and authority is seen very prominently throughout. This is by the use of many interruptions and repetitions. Also through breaking the maxim of quantity here is the part of the conversation in which she shows all three of these features 'No..No trust me Sir it wouldn't of been easy for you to do that err everybody is particularly interested in what your up to at Merlin at the moment and you say technicality and training needs to be updated that would be that it wasn't good enough before' as you can see Burley has a lot to say and by flooding the Chief executive with her opinions without him being able to interrupt she has massively gained power over the interview.

From this quotation she refutes Ann Weatherall's theory here as she stated 'women speak for less time and are less likely to interrupt' which is certainly not apparent from Burley within this transcript.

What is interesting regarding this interview is that Burley's language features and traits mostly don't correspond with the theories that are stated regarding women, but I feel this is purely down to the topic of conversation being extremely passionate about the event that occurred at Alton Towers

or the fact she is interviewing the opposite gender and feels she can allow herself to speak a lot more open minded and expressively as it's not a woman.

Jeremy Paxman interviewing minister Chloe Smith on news night

Date: 26th June 2012

Now I will analyse the use of language features within male presenters starting with Jeremy Paxman interviewing minister Chloe Smith.

With an interview lead by Jeremy Paxman (66) a English broadcaster, journalist for the BBC and is well known for his forthright and abrasive interviewing style especially when interviewing politicians. In this case he is interviewing minister Chloe Smith (34) on News night.

The formality of Jeremy Paxman's choice of language and interview style is apparent from the outset of this interview, as he chooses to include no phatic communication at all when greeting and welcoming Chloe Smith into the conversation, and is very straight to the point starting with an interrogative sentence portraying his dominance and eager personality promptly. Which is a common theoretical acknowledgement that men see language as a means of asserting dominance from the theorist Deborah Tannen also from theorist Christine Howe that 'Men are much more likely to respond to what is being said, keen to put their personal views across'. These theories are also highlighted by Paxman's almost intimidating repetitive interrogative questions frequently being used but remaining calm while doing so, for example 'Well did it happen today?' and ' You can't remember?' which causes the interviewee to incorporate many non fluency features into her response such as stuttering and digression as shown in this quotation 'We had. uh, collective discussion of that, er, er, in due course and although I can't, you know, give you the sort of full glory' which confirms Paxman's gain of power.

It is apparent throughout the whole of the interview that Paxman includes many examples of the second person pronoun '**you**' when addressing Chloe Smith with an interrogative 'When were **you** told''But **you** didn't take the decisions, obviously, **you** said the chancellor and the prime minister did, so when were **you** told?' this features him directly addressing her Chloe and also assuming she is to blame. I personally feel this is a way of Paxman trying to problem solve his way into admitting some of her mistakes.

Paxman uses parallelism in the form of repeating the phrase 'When was the decision take?' which shows Deborah Tannen's theory that 'Men are prone to arguing' and this

confirms that as he argues the interviewee Chloe into answering his question.

Overall this transcript relates to many male theories due to the dominating, competitive language features, even though Paxman is interviewing a young woman this doesn't effect him trying to interrogate her with intense questions.

Nick Grimshaw interviewing Justin Bieber on his breakfast show

Date: Oct 27, 2015

Finally an interview lead by Nick Grimshaw (32) the popular Radio 1 DJ interviewing world famous Canadian pop star Justin Bieber (22) which shows an informal conversation as the pair discuss where they last spoke and how life in England is for Justin.

Unlike Paxman in the previous interview, Nick Grimshaw shows a very different approach to his interview as he starts with general phatic communication, which may not be used as a form of politeness but could be showing his nerves, as he's interviewing such a massive pop star, and is just generalising himself and Bieber into the interview to create a more relaxed and informal atmosphere.

Nick shows no signs of trying to compete with Bieber in this interview as they appear more as friends, and as if it's just a general conversation between the two of them this can be seen by the use of real speech utilised from Nick for example 'It's been a while''I think I seen you briefly in Ibiza one time' which doesn't match many theories as they all state 'Men's talk is competitive and see language as a way of asserting dominance'.

The only sentence throughout the interview in which Nick has a strategy for gaining power is when he uses topic shift 'How's it been in the UK so far then since you've been?' which shows Christine Howe's theory and that Nick's gaining control and power over the conversation but not in a competitive manner.

Within this transcript androcentric language is prominent, which is due to Nick interviewing a fellow male for example ' I saw you went to the pub'' I love how you went to the pub for a pint' the words 'pub' and 'pint' are associated with the male gender.

Nick abbreviates 'want to' to 'wanna' which is a form of downwards convergence, he allows his lexis choice to be more informal and could of been applied to close the age gap so Nick would be seen as a bit cooler, and so they are on the same level as each other.

Lastly Nick refutes one of Deborah Tannen's theories which states that men 'go it alone' by his interaction with the interviewee throughout the interview. By the use of feedback (laughing), Nick commenting co-operatively 'Yeah I liked that' and humour that is apparent within.

In conclusion this transcript relates to just a few theories that apply for the male gender, but mostly disagree with them I feel this is due to the incredibly high status of the guest which means the presenter choses to keep the interview simple and low key.

Conclusion

Overall, there were some distinguishable differences when comparing the male and female presenters use of language in an interview environment but there were factors that might have caused some changes . These changes occurred depending on the interview type, the actual interviewers personality and conversational style. For example what I predicted within my hypothesis that 'Men use strategic language features to gain power in conversational situations' was proven by Paxman's use of frequent intimidating repetitive interrogative questions used which caused the interviewee Chloe Smith to utilise non fluency features when responding, thus confirming Paxman's gain of power during the interview.

Another example of my hypothesis being proven was that 'Women's talk among other women is co-operative' this could clearly be seen within Lorraine Kelly's interview with Laura Whitmore as her accommodating personality and chosen lexis such as empty adjectives applied to soften and add friendly elements to the sentences for example ' Amazing ' 'fun'. Although it could be said that this interview was more conversational in style than the Paxman interview.

On the other hand, the statement I predicted that 'Women are active listeners and use minor interjections' was not proven to be correct within all women presenters in the transcripts I analysed. Kay Burley showed that here was a more interrogating side to her during interviews as during her interview with the Chief Executive of Alton Towers, she used an opposite approach which resulted in more major and strong interjections showing her anger about the situation and also from her interrupting the interviewee which highlighted she is also not an active listener.

Due to not all of my hypothesis being proven and supported in this investigation, I personally feel that there is not a complete difference between male and female chosen language in interviews as depending on factors such as the personality, reputation and interview situation the language chosen by the presenters can differ huge amounts.

Evaluation

Throughout the whole process of collecting data and analysing it to then produce my English coursework, I have only came across a few minor problems which needed to be resolved to make my overall outcome the best it could be.

These included having to change one of my transcripts which I intended to use as the interview lacked a lot of information which I was able to comment on and wasn't the most exciting topic to feature. So the procedure I carried out in which to solve this was research other transcripts and pick an alternative which contained an interesting topic and lots of varied language use so I could have a wider range of data collected.

Principal Moderator's Comments

Investigation

In broad terms this is an appropriate topic to explore and there is certainly some sense that the candidate is seeking to explore the differences in language use between men and women within a broadcasted interview situation. However, there is a lack of clarity regarding what underpinning theory/ theories and concepts the candidate is drawing on in terms of gender and power –these are mentioned but not fully explained. Why should the differences in the way men and women engage with interviewees be revealing about gender and power relationships? Why should one wish to engage with such a discussion – what does it say about society, gendered language etc etc?

A01 – 6 marks

The major sections of the investigation have been addressed and on the whole the appropriate emphasis (in terms of word count allocation) has been applied - though the hypothesis section requires greater focus. There is some logic and cohesion in terms of how each section is unpacked, though greater attention could have been applied to prioritising key findings in the analysis and conclusion sections. Similarly, while there is a sense of general cross-referencing across the sections of the investigations - links between the sections need to be more consistent and detailed. In particular, key theories are mentioned in the analysis section, but have not been previously unpacked in the introduction, hypothesis or methodology sections. Furthermore, more could be done to separate the data analysis and the theoretical findings within the analysis and conclusion sections as there is considerable overlap and therefore lost opportunities to address the questions posed by the research focus.

There are many instances of appropriate academic terminology being used in relation to language devices. However, the overall register lacks the quality and sophistication of academic writing. An easy fix would be to elevate above the conversational tone that is adopted. The quality of writing is, on the whole, clear and easy to follow, but there are some examples of grammatical inaccuracies (which on occasion do hinder clarity). There are also a number of typos, which given careful editing could be easily eradicated. Bullet points should not be adopted within the investigation where this leads to a lack of detailed explanation.

A02 – 6 marks

There is certainly some good engagement with language theories and concepts and it is pleasing to see the number of key theorists/theories that are addressed. There is a sense that the candidate understands how certain language features link with the premise of the theories that they have employed. This being said, the level of theoretical/conceptual engagement is not always particularly detailed. Had the candidate taken more time to introduce and unpack the theories within the early sections of the investigation a more cohesive and analytical engagement with the theories could have been adopted within the analysis and conclusion sections. There is certainly a level of critical engagement, and some sound comments are made as to how the data supports or refutes the theories on gender and power that the candidate wishes to explore.

A03 – 6 marks

While there is a broad sense that the candidate is seeking to unpick how presenters of both genders interact with interviewees in terms of power relationships, there is no very clear underlying premise as to what contexts the candidate is drawing on to make this a relevant area of exploration. What assumptions about gender relationships are being addressed? Why should one wish to explore how men and women utilise power within interview circumstances – what societal norms/behaviours etc might be evidenced here? Or, indeed, can certain assumptions about men and women's language use, as a reflection of societal roles, be refuted as a result of the evidence? Furthermore it is not fully addressed as to why choosing evidence from "serious" interviews and pop-culture/ light entertainment interviews will aid in understanding how men and women differ in their language usage and therefore manipulation of power dynamics. Perhaps the candidate has invested a little too much in why they personally find this area an interesting area of study, rather than considering why this is an academically relevant area of study – and why the data sources might provide interesting revelations in relation to gender power relationships.

'Language differences between male and female presenters in interviews'

Introduction

The broadcasting industry I personally find is one of the most fascinating, exciting and interesting ways of showing individuals true personalities and is a exceptional way of keeping up to date with current affairs. As I am hopefully in the future going to pursue a career in this industry, I thought investigating the way in which language differs between male and female presenters would be an extremely interesting topic to cover, and is the reason as to why I have chosen to analyse this for my coursework.

Gender and power are the two main categories I am going to analyse, as I predict they will show a huge difference in terms of the information that is collected, and portray a clear idea to either confirm or refute my hypothesis.

I chose interview situations for my analysis as I feel this is the only way of showing natural use of language by both genders and a real variation of features employed.

When choosing my transcripts in which I will analyse a variety of situations were chosen for example, my first is an interview with Lorraine Kelly (56) on her own morning chat who is interviewing Laura Whitmore (31) an Irish TV presenter chatting about the up and coming Brit Awards. Next an interview lead by Nick Grimshaw (32) the popular Radio 1 DJ interviewing world famous Canadian pop star Justin Bieber (22) which shows an informal conversation as the pair discuss where they last spoke and how life in England is for Justin. Thirdly is a formal and controversial interview lead by Kay Burley a English television newsreader and presenter (55), interviewing the Alton towers Chief Executive following the rollercoaster crash at the theme park which left four seriously injured, one of whom had her leg amputated. This interview was labelled as highly charged and Burley was seen grilling the executive, some also questioned whether Burley was being given a harder time over the interview because she was a woman. Finally is an interview lead by Jeremy Paxman (66) a English broadcaster, journalist for the BBC and is well known for his forthright and abrasive interviewing style especially when interviewing politicians. In this case he is interviewing minister Chloe Smith (34) on News night.

I will personally collect all four of these interview transcripts and compare the grammar, lexis, semantics, grammar and theoretical links to produce an in depth analysis which will highlight key information regarding the two genders differences in interview situations.

Methodology

When collecting my research I picked all four different interviews to enable a clear difference can be shown between the two genders, also so a comparison can be completed with the data to show an obvious trend.

Firstly I started by reading, watching and listening to as many interviews as I possibly could regarding the research for my analysis, to provide as much background knowledge for myself in terms of styles and structures of interviews, to then go on to select the very finest of interviews to include in this analysis.

Next I carefully picked interviews which categorised the different genders into different situations to highlight a clear divide into changes, for example a male interviewing the same and opposite gender then the corresponding concept for the women.

The genre of the interviews were taken into consideration, I opted for a more controversial interview lead by Kay Burley, a political interview (Paxman), and two quite relaxed and chatty conversations (Lorraine and Nick Grimshaw). These all show a wide range of mixed situations and topics which I consider makes for an interesting analysis.

All transcripts were produced by listening to the interviews from the internet source 'Youtube', and transcribing the key parts of each conversation that included the most interaction within the interviews onto a word document then ready to print off. Finally key language features were highlighted and annotated ready to analyse.

Conclusion

Overall, there were some distinguishable differences when comparing the male and female presenters use of language in an interview environment but this factor changed huge amounts depending on the interview type, the actual interviewers personality and conversational style. For example what I predicted within my hypothesis that 'Men use strategic language features to gain power in conversational situations' was proven by Paxman's intimidating repetitive interrogative questions frequently being used which caused the interviewee Smith to utilise non fluency features confirming his gain of power. Another example of my hypothesis being proven was that 'Women's talk among other women is co-operative' this could clearly be seen within Lorraine Kelly's interview as her accommodating personality and chosen lexis such as empty adjectives applied to soften and add friendly elements to the sentences for example ' Amazing ' 'fun'.

On the other hand, the statement I predicted that 'Women are active listeners and use minor interjections' was not proven to be correct within all women presenters in the transcripts I analysed, as Kay Burley showed a more interrogating side in which she used the opposite which were more major and strong interjections showing her anger about the situation and from her interrupting the interviewee which highlighted she is also not an active listener.

Due to not all of my hypothesis being proven and supported in this investigation, I personally feel that there is not a complete difference between male and female chosen language in interviews as depending on factors such as the personality, reputation and interview situation the language chosen by the presenters can differ huge amounts.

Hypothesis

I predict my findings will include:

- Men have use strategic language features to gain power in conversational situations
- Women's talk among other women is co-operative
- Men see language as a means of asserting dominance
- Women are active listeners and use minor interjections

Evaluation

Throughout the whole process of collecting data and analysing it to then produce my English coursework, I have only came across a few minor problems which needed to be resolved to make my overall outcome the best it could be. These included having to change one of my transcripts which I intended to use as the interview lacked a lot of information which I was able to comment on and wasn't the most exciting topic to feature. So the procedure I carried out in which to solve this was research other transcripts and pick an alternative which contained an interesting topic and lots of varied language use so I could have a wider range of data collected.

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Principal Moderator's Comments

The poster

A05 – Level 1 – 2 marks

It appears that this candidate has simply cut and pasted sections of the investigation to the corresponding sections of the poster and for this reason there is very little engagement with the 'new' audience and format presented by the poster. Most of the key sections have been covered, but there is no analysis/findings section which is a serious oversight. Due to the fact that very little effort has been made to utilise the poster format to present the information in an appropriate style for the new audience only level one can be achieved.

Overall

Total – 20/40 = Mid Level 3

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