



الجامعة العربية المفتوحة
Arab Open University

ASSIGNMENT BOOKLET 2004-2005

U210A - The English Language: past, present, and future part I

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Supplementary Material
U210A The English Language: past, present and future
part I

U210A

ASSIGNMENT BOOKLET 2004/2005

(including TMAs 01-03)*

Completing and sending in your assignments

When writing your assignment:

- put your name, and the assignment number at the top of every sheet.

When you have finished your assignment:

- fill in Section 1 of the PT3 form, taking care to enter your personal identifier and the assignment number correctly

Cut-off dates

TMA 01	by the end of week 6
TMA 02	by the end of week 9
TMA 03	by the end of week 13

* Material given on pp. 4-12 is taken from *Assignment Book 2002* by Diana Honeybone, pp. 4-11, The Open University. Material was slightly modified in order to take AOU examination and assessment regulations into consideration. The TMAs were prepared by Michael Hughes, reviewed, and approved by Mohammad Awwad. Layout by Safinaz Shariff.

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Introduction

There are three tutor-marked assignments (TMAs) for the course, each related to one of Blocks 1-3.

The *Study Calendar* shows the distribution of TMAs and gives the cut-off dates for their submission. There is no TMA associated with Block 4. This is due only to time limitations and scheduling constraints: during the three study weeks allocated for studying the material, related readings and activities comprising the Block, you are also required to send/hand in TMA3, get your tutor's feedback on it, and prepare for the final examination. As an important component of the course, Block 4 requires careful study, analysis, understanding and assessments of all material it covers. Therefore, the final examination will include a compulsory question assessing your understanding of its major themes and arguments. The TMAs are equally weighted, and you should attempt each one. Your course result will depend upon your achievement in the two components of assessment. The TMAs and quizzes constitute 100 per cent of the Continuous Assessment Component, and the final examination constitutes 100% of the Examinable Component. You must obtain at least 50 per cent in the Examinable Component to be certain of obtaining a pass result. (Please refer to the *Study Calendar* for further information.)

As well as contributing to the overall assessment of the course, the TMAs will help to consolidate your work on each block, and your grade will give some indication of how well you are doing. Your tutor's comments will explain the grade more fully and provide guidance on becoming more proficient at setting out your ideas and arguments in writing – an important skill in studying at university level. You will also find the TMAs helpful in pacing your work over the semester.

We recommend that you keep a copy of each assignment for reference and as a safeguard against the unlikely event that your submitted TMA is lost.

You should hand in or mail your assignments to your tutor to arrive by the cut-off date. A set of TMA forms, coded PT3, is included in your course mailing. Attach one of these to each TMA you submit. Please ensure that the PT3 form is completed correctly.

If you think you may be late with an assignment, consult your tutor as soon as you can (and, in any case, before the submission date). The University's policy on late submission is set out in the *AOU Examination Bylaws*)

Learning Outcomes

The TMAs will take account of the learning outcomes drawn up for the course. Learning outcomes are what you can expect to achieve if you take full advantage of the learning opportunities provided. They include knowledge and understanding of the ideas and issues discussed in the course materials, along with certain skills (e.g. skills to do with discussing ideas and evaluating arguments). Set out below are the learning outcomes particularly relevant to your study of the course.

Knowledge and understanding

To be successful in your study of this course, you are expected to demonstrate knowledge and understanding of:

- the history of English from the Old English period to the present day, recognizing the relationship of linguistic history to social and political processes (Block 1);
- variation and change in contemporary English in different parts of the world (Block 2);
- how spoken and written English may be used to differing effects in a range of social and cultural contexts (Block 3);
- stylistic, social and political issues surrounding the creative and literary use of English (Block 4);
- how English works, and how it may be described and analysed (parts of each block; *Describing Language*);
- the nature of linguistic evidence, and different methods used in the collection and analysis of language data (parts of each block; *Describing Language*);
- how your learning in different parts of the course may be integrated according to the course themes: varieties of English; changing English; English in context; status and meaning of English; English and identity; achieving things in English; regulating English; discourses about English.

Cognitive skills

To be successful in your study of this course, you are expected to:

- identify and summarize the main points in an academic argument;
- critically evaluate alternative explanations and arguments;
- interpret and evaluate linguistic evidence;
- learn and use appropriate terminology for the study of language;
- apply the knowledge and understanding acquired from the course to the analysis of spoken, written and multimodal texts in English.

Communication skills

To be successful in your study of this course, you are expected to:

- identify the purpose of an academic assignment, and plan a strategy for tackling it;
- identify and evaluate the relevance of information from a variety of sources;
- identify the view points of authors of source material;
- synthesize and organize information from a range of sources;
- construct a coherent argument, supported by evidence and clearly focused on the topic under discussion;
- present the argument clearly and in an appropriate academic style and format;
- provide appropriate academic references to the sources used in preparing written work;
- respond to feedback about improving the effectiveness of written communication for academic purposes.

These learning outcomes are reflected in the assessment criteria that your tutor will take into account when marking your TMA (assessment criteria are listed on p. 11).

In addition to these outcomes, you can expect to acquire other 'generic' skills that would apply to many second level courses. These would include practical skills such as managing substantial amounts of information and organizing time effectively.

Types of assignment

Assignments include:

- general essays in which, for instance, you are asked to respond to a question, or discuss and evaluate a statement – such essays normally relate to more than one study week;
- assignments based more narrowly on particular course materials – for instance, you may be asked to review a course reading, or compare the position taken in different readings;
- assignments that take as their stimulus a piece of data such as a transcript, newspaper cutting, audiocassette extract or short piece of written text, which you are asked to analyse or discuss.

Assignments may also contain a mixture of these elements. Across the course as a whole you will have a choice from a wide range of topics and between different types of assignment.

Each TMA offers two options from which you choose one. Answer *either* Option (a) *or* Option (b), and indicate clearly which option you are attempting.

In devising assignments we have tried to observe the following principles:

- the assignment should be unambiguous (i.e. the wording should be clear, and the task you are required to do should be clearly explained);
- the assignment should relate in a straightforward way to the course materials (i.e. the questions should be consistent with the study questions and study guidance for each block – there should be no unpleasant surprises!).

We provide notes to help you in tackling each option and to help your tutor in marking it (there are no separate notes for tutors). At the beginning of the course these notes give fairly full advice on how to structure your answer. We give slightly less help towards the end of the course, because you will need some practice in more independent writing for the course examination. Please note that the guidance is meant to assist you and not be a rigid prescription that you must follow, so you should not feel constrained by these suggestions if you prefer an alternative structure for your essay. You should consult your tutor if you are in any doubt.

The notes below give advice on planning and writing assignments. Some of this may be familiar to you if you have previously studied courses in related areas. If you have had limited experience of essay writing, you should pay particular attention to the advice given here and, if necessary, ask your tutor for help in putting it into practice. A useful additional source of help is *The Arts Good Study Guide* by Ellie Chambers and Andrew Northedge (1997, The Open University).

Planning your work for the assignments

At the beginning of each block you should look through the related TMA options and bear these in mind as you study. The block study guides suggest that you collect material for your preferred option as you work through the block, rather than leaving all the work till the end.

When you come to write your assignment, it is useful first of all to remind yourself of the general criteria for marking assignments (see p. 11). Then you should assemble the material you have been collecting for your preferred option, check through the question wording and notes, and draw up a plan of what you intend to cover.

You could begin with a series of subheadings based on the TMA notes, gathering under each subheading your own list of the points you wish to make and the information or evidence you have collected in support of each point.

The total length of each assignment should be 1,500-2,000 words (excluding the words in any cuttings you may be using). It is a good idea to indicate on your plan the (approximate) number of words you intend to devote to each section. Normally you should allocate a small number of words to your introduction (say, 150-200 words) and maybe a few more to your conclusion, with the bulk of the word allowance divided between your major sections.

When you have completed your plan, look carefully through it and check it against the assignment question. Does it contain enough material to enable you to answer the question? Does all the material seem relevant? Can you think of any additional evidence or information? Within and between each heading, is the material in an appropriate order? Does it allow you to build up an argument, moving logically from one point to the next?

Writing up your assignments

Length

Each TMA should be 1,500-2,000 words. Refer back to your plan to remind yourself of how you are apportioning your total allowance. You do not need to supply an accurate word count, but you must take care not to go significantly under or over length. In a very short essay you will not be able to cover sufficient material in enough depth, while an overlong essay usually means that you are not selecting and editing your material properly. A long answer will use up more of your study time, for which you will gain no extra credit. You may also be tempted to include irrelevant material that could detract from your answer and/or make it more difficult for your tutor to follow your argument.

References and quotations within your essay will be considered part of the total length, so must be kept concise. Bibliographies are not included in the word count.

Structure and presentation

If you have drawn up your plan carefully, writing your assignment should flow more easily: you are simply writing out, in continuous prose, the notes you made under each heading of your plan. The following suggestions may help:

- Some people find it easier to write their introduction last of all, when they know what it is they are introducing! Others prefer to write their introduction first, outlining what they are going to do in their essay, and then refer back to it when writing the rest of their answer.
- Ideally, type or word-process your answer; but, if this is not possible, write it as clearly as you can. It can be very difficult for a tutor to make a fair assessment of work that is hard to read.
- Make sure you leave sufficient space on each page (e.g. wide margins) for your tutor to make comments.
- Do not be afraid to use subheadings in the final version if you want to. This maybe a departure from conventions you are used to – you may feel that essays should be a seamless whole. However, headings can help you to structure your argument and to see more clearly where you are in danger of including irrelevant material. Alternatively, and especially if you are word-processing, you may prefer to include subheadings in the earlier drafts of your answer and then remove them in the final version.
- Try to include signposts to help your reader along (e.g. draw points together at the end of a section, then indicate how you are going to follow on from these in the next section.)
- For some TMAs there maybe a wide range of material to draw on. You must try to select the most relevant material for your purpose: *you are **not** required to use every suggestion provided in this booklet.* Your tutor will not expect you to cram in every possible detail, and if you attempt to do so you run the risk of failing to cover anything in sufficient depth. Select the material you want to use, set it out in your introduction and then follow this plan in your essay. The guidance on structure for each TMA option in this booklet will help you to plan and structure your work, but you may use an alternative framework if you wish.
- If you are unsure about your writing style, you could ask a friend or colleague to read through a draft and tell you of any points that are unclear. (the course materials themselves provide examples of appropriate writing styles, such as the notes on chapters in the course books, which are in the study guides to Week 1 and Block 1.)
- When you have finished your assignment, read it through carefully. Check that it is clear and provides a full answer to the question. At this point you should also check aspects of presentation (spelling, punctuation, etc.)

If you feel that you need additional support with academic writing, or if you have any specific difficulties (e.g. with handwriting or spelling), you should discuss this with your tutor early on in the course and try to work out a way of minimizing any problems.

Referring to the course material and other sources

Your assignment is meant to provide evidence that you have read and understood the course materials. You may refer briefly to other sources of evidence if you wish, but *your*

assignments will be assessed primarily on your understanding and use of the course materials. Whatever the source of your evidence, remember that it is not sufficient simply to *reproduce* it – you need not use it to advance your argument.

Citing material from the course

When you are reporting a piece of research or an argument, you should make it clear where this comes from. The course chapters provide examples of the usual academic conventions for doing this (e.g. 'Quirk (1986) claimed that ...'). Since you and your tutor have access to the same course material, you can, if you wish, use a form of reference such as: 'In Chapter 1 Reading A, Randolph Quirk claimed that ...'; or 'On Audiocassette 1 Band 3, Dick Leith suggested ..' The main thing is to make it clear which piece of work you are drawing on. Wherever possible, give precise page references: this not only makes it easier for your tutor to check the evidence you are drawing on; it also helps you trace your sources when you come to revise.

You may wish to include brief quotations from the course materials. In this case, they should be clearly set out as quotations, and the source should be given. Otherwise, if you are discussing ideas from the course, try to read and absorb these, then write what you think about them in your own words. It is particularly important, when setting out your own ideas or arguments, that you do not reproduce long extracts from the course (or from other sources) with little or no change, as this gives the impression that you are trying to pass off someone else's ideas as your own. This could constitute plagiarism, which is treated as a very serious offence by the University. Below is an extract from a chapter on plagiarism, which you may find helpful.

What is plagiarism?

Plagiarism is the *theft* of other people's words and ideas. Plagiarism happens when you claim (or *appear* to claim) that an idea, or the expression of it, is your own when in fact it is someone else's. Deliberate plagiarism usually takes the form of either getting someone else to write your essay for you and then saying it's yours, or copying chunks of text out of a book with the deliberate intent of deceiving the reader into thinking they are in your own words. Accidental plagiarism, which most institutions are obliged to penalize equally heavily, is achieved by oversight and/or lack of skill in manipulating information. Here are some examples of how it can happen:

- You make notes from a book, copying out lots of relevant passages and then, when you come to write the essay, you copy your notes into it, forgetting that they were copied in the first place.
- You use a book which covers exactly the area you are dealing with; you are aware that you mustn't copy it out, so you deftly rephrase little bits, by replacing 'small' with 'little', 'major differences' by 'main differences' and by swapping over the order of two halves of a sentence. *You* think that this is now legitimate, but your assessors do not.
- You use entirely your own words, but you don't acknowledge the source of your information.
- You draw from notes you made or were given for some previous course of study, without realizing that these were copied or adapted from some other source.

A reader will assume that any idea not referenced is your own, and that any passage not in quote marks is in your own words. This is a contract of trust which you must respect.

How to avoid accidental plagiarism: some strategies

Expect to acknowledge everything you've got from a source other than your own head. The things that don't need referencing are your own ideas and common or uncontroversial knowledge (*English is a Germanic Language*, for example). If in doubt, err on the side of *over*—referencing, until you get the knack. Having too many references in a text breaks up the flow of your writing, but that is the lesser of two evils. To avoid too much repetition, you may be able to say at the beginning of a section or paragraph: *The following is a summary of information given in Smith (1994)*. Note, however, that it is *not* sufficient to give one vague reference to your source somewhere, and then draw directly from it for page after page.

Rather than just summarizing what you are reading for the sake of it, make notes relevant to the task in hand and identify the major points that relate to your purpose. Make the notes under headings; you can then write out your own version based on those points. When making notes, use your own words wherever possible. Never copy anything out without putting it in inverted commas and putting a page reference next to it. Always keep the full reference details for any source you draw on, as you will need them later. These details should be integral to your notes, so that you can easily see where an idea or quote has come from. Where your source text gives examples of a phenomenon under discussion, try to think of some examples of your own (or look them up in a dictionary or another book). This is in any case a good way of ensuring that you understand what you are writing about. However, if you are in doubt about whether your example is valid (e.g. where the examples have been drawn from a particular source that you cannot access), quote the ones you have been given and acknowledge them appropriately. If there is any terminology you don't understand, look it up [or ask your tutor for advice], don't just copy it out.

(Wray *et al*, 1998)

Listing your sources in a bibliography

At the end of your assignment, you should list the sources to which you have referred. The course books illustrate the conventional layout for different types of reference (see examples in the box below). When referring to course materials, you do not need to give such full sources (you could simply list materials as '*Describing Language*, Chapter 1' or 'Audiocassette 2 Band 2 Indian English', etc.). The important thing is that your tutor should be clear about material you have drawn on.

Reference list styles

Note: it is usual to italicize book titles; however, if you are not able to do this, you should underline them instead.

Book

TRUDGILL, P. and HANNAH, J. (1994, 3rd edn) *International English*, London, Edward Arnold.

Chapter/extract from an edited collection

HARRIS, J. (1993) 'The grammar of Irish English' in MILROY, J. and MILROY, L. (eds) *Real English: the grammar of English dialects in the British Isles*, London, Longman.

Paper in a journal or magazine

WALES, L. (1994) 'Royalese: the rise and fall of "the Queen's English" ', *English Today*, vol. 10, no. 3, pp. 3-10.

Some frequently asked questions

Here we offer some guidance on some of the dilemmas that occur regularly when preparing to answer a TMA.

What should I do if the question is not clear or seems ambiguous?

As mentioned above, we try to ensure this will not be a problem. However, if you feel a question is unclear, you should contact your tutor in the first instance: he or she should be able to help you sort out any confusion. Failing that, you should state in your introduction how you are interpreting the question (together with whatever justification you think is necessary) and then proceed to answer it on those terms.

What should I do if I disagree with the arguments being put in the course material?

You are not expected to agree with everything that is said in the course book or audiovisual material. Indeed, we hope that you will engage in a critical dialogue with the analysis and arguments you encounter.

However, any criticism you offer should be based on sound knowledge and understanding of the ideas and information presented in that part of the course, and your reservations should be supported by relevant argument and information either from the course material or another source that is fully acknowledged and referenced.

Should I include personal experience and material from other sources?

You are often asked, as part of your study, to relate ideas in the course to your own experiences of English. It is also suggested that you collect your own examples of material to put in a 'cuttings file'. Examples might be newspaper articles dealing with any aspect of English, advertisements, letters, business cards, and so on. You may also like to jot down examples of English that you hear around you or which your children use. Some TMAs may refer directly to the cuttings file, with suggestions on how this may be used. Where TMAs do not do this, you may still feel that you have examples which are relevant. In this case, ensure that any examples you include can be related to the question; try to use them to illustrate or address points from the course; and select a small number of examples so that you have enough space to deal with ideas and evidence discussed in the course materials. Please remember to acknowledge your source. Extensive analyses should be accompanied by a photocopy of the original wherever possible.

Marking criteria

Your tutor will primarily make use of the following criteria in deciding what mark to give your assignment.

- *The relevance of your answer to the question as set*
Your tutor will look for evidence that you have clearly understood the question and directed your answer accordingly.
- *Your knowledge and understanding of the course material*
Your tutor will look for evidence that you have understood and can draw effectively on research evidence, ideas, concepts and arguments that are central to the course.
- *Your ability to discuss and evaluate alternative explanations and arguments*
Researchers and other commentators may provide different (and sometimes competing) explanations for linguistic events and processes. Your tutor will look to see whether you are able to discuss these, and evaluate any arguments put forward in support of a particular viewpoint.
- *The ability to present and pursue an argument*
Your tutor will examine the structure of your answer to assess how well you can put together the material you use to sustain and support an argument.
- *The ability to express yourself clearly using academic conventions as appropriate*
Your tutor will look for clarity in your work, in the way you make points, present research findings and make critical comments. You are not expected to make extensive use of technical vocabulary, but you should be able to refer to key terms and concepts from the course materials. You should also acknowledge clearly any sources you have drawn on.

Please also take note of the guidance on pages 5-9 which offers suggestions on structure and presentation, and on referring to source material in your essay.

For assignments that include practical work with language data, your tutor will take into account:

- *Your ability to make a clear analysis and interpretation of language data as specified in the assignment*

Your tutor will look to see whether your analysis is appropriate, whether it draws on relevant ideas and concepts from the course, and whether any interpretation you give is justified by reference to relevant aspects of the data.

The comments from your tutor should explain why you received the marks given. They will cover the content of your assignment (e.g. your understanding of key issues, the argument you have constructed). Comments may also include teaching points about aspects of your work which could have been strengthened or extended. In addition, they may suggest ways of improving your performance in future assignments.

The detailed marking criteria your tutor will use in marking both your TMAs, and final examination paper are as indicated on the following page.

The marking scheme for this course will be as follows:

Marking Criteria*

	<i>Criteria Mark/Band</i>	<i>Relevance to question</i>	<i>Knowledge and understanding of course material</i>	<i>Approach to alternative explanations and arguments</i>	<i>Construction of argument</i>	<i>Clear expression and use of academic conventions</i>	<i>Approach to language data (where appropriate)</i>
F	0<35 Fail	None or slight	Very little from course/fundamental misunderstandings	None or with no support from course	Slight	Expression and sentence structure needs attention/insufficient referencing	Slight
	35<50 Bare Fail (F)	Some relevant material but failure to address question	Little appreciation of main idea or inadequate knowledge/insufficient reading	No evidence of critical thinking	Lack of organization	Deficiencies	Insufficient/not enough detailed discussion of data
D	50<70 Satisfactory	Some ability to identify main issues	Very basic understanding of course material/substantial omissions and/or misunderstandings	Lacking /heavily descriptive	Lines of arguments may be clear for short sections but not sustained or developed	Bare bones of structure/coherent expression/attempts at referencing	Analysis barely appropriate /related to course. Interpretations barely justified
C C+	70<80 Good	Clear evidence of understanding question and overall direction of answer	Effective drawing on evidence/ideas/concepts and arguments central to the course	Recognition and limited discussion of competing explanations for linguistic events/processes	Clear, sustained argument	Good structure/ expression/referencing	Analysis barely appropriate/ related to course. Interpretations justified
B B+	80<90 Very Good	Utilizes a wide range of relevant and contemporary material to produce a cogent and insightful argument	Comprehensive and judicious use of relevant literature	Good discussion of competing explanations and arguments	Assertions are made with evaluated evidence; all sections contributing	Very good structure, expression and ability to employ sources appropriately	Very good analysis. Judicious interpretations.
A	90-100 Excellent	Creative /original relevant stance	Excellent knowledge and understanding	Critical approach	Cohesive/and original/creative	Excellent structure, expression and use of evidence	Excellent analysis/ interpretations

*These marking criteria are informed by and mostly extracted from the UKOU U210A Assignment Booklet 2004 (p. 30). They are to be used as general guidelines for marking TMAs, tests, and the final examination as long as they do not violate criteria and marking standards set by AOU including the marking and grading system indicated on page 18 of this Assignment Booklet. They are also subject to any changes AOU might deem necessary.

TMA 01

Please return your completed assignment to your tutor to arrive by the end of week 6.

This assignment covers your study of Block 1(Weeks 1-5). Your answer should be about 1,500-2,000 words in length.

TMA 01

Starting with an analysis of comments made by David Crystal in Reading A of Chapter 1 [Block 1, *English: history, diversity and change*] what are the main issues relating to the status and use of English by speakers for whom English is not their mother tongue ? Reinforce your points by reference to other comments made in the main discussion of Chapter 1.

Notes

Before beginning your assignment, you should refer to the general guidance on essay writing at the beginning of this booklet.

Your main sources of information for this answer will be Chapter 1 of Block 1 of *English: history, diversity and change* and its associated Reading A. Additional material will be found in:

- Chapter 4, which signals how English has developed into a modern national language.
- TV 1, which gives various opinions and ideas of various commentators on how they view the position of English.
- Audiocassette 1, bands 4 and 5, which respectively consider the relationship of English to Scots and Irish English.
- Chapter 1 of *Describing Language*, which makes general points on the nature of language [eg pages 13-16].
- Reading B of Chapter 1 in the course book, which again reflects on how English is viewed and used in other countries.

Structuring your essay

By way of introduction you might first indicate how you intend approaching the topic, moving on to isolate and reflect briefly on what Crystal identifies as major perceptions of English as a second or “foreign” language.

You could then extract points from Chapter 1 which pick up the history of the English language and reasons for the gradual emergence of distinct varieties. Additional evidence may be found on audiocassette 1 as well as in Reading B.

Opportunity may now arise for a more focussed view on modern English and implications for those who do not have it as their mother tongue, amongst other things exploring social and cultural reasons; you may wish to draw ideas from Chapter 4 as well as TV 1.

Summarize your points with a succinct concluding paragraph, demonstrating key points you have addressed in responding to the TMA title. Remember to add a bibliography at the end of your essay.

TMA 02

Please return your completed assignment to your tutor to arrive by the end of week 9.

This assignment covers your study of Block 2(Weeks 6-8). Your answer should be about 1,500-2,000 words in length.

TMA 02

What are the essential functions of styleshifting and codeswitching in English as discussed in Chapter 8 of Block 2, *English: history, diversity and change*? Illustrate your answer by reference to Coupland’s study in Reading A of that chapter, together with any other evidence presented in Block 2 and elsewhere.

Before beginning your assignment, you should refer to the general guidance on essay writing at the beginning of this booklet.

This question invites you to investigate styleshifting in English and codeswitching between English and other languages, reinforcing your commentary with illustrations from one case-study. You will need to consider the main functions of style-shifting as set against codeswitching, signalling the linguistic mechanisms employed by speakers as they switch varieties.

Materials will be found in Block 2. Particular sources of information, from which you should make appropriate choice, will be:

- Chapter 8 in *English: history, diversity and change* and associated Reading A.
- Audiocassette 2, Band 7 “Styleshifting in Cardiff” and the accompanying notes in *Study Guide 2*.
- Readings B and C of Chapter 8 which exemplify further the nature and practice of codeswitching.
- Chapter 7, especially Section 7.4, which discusses work on speaking styles.
- Audiocassette 2, Band 8 on “Codeswitching between Hindi, Kannada and English”.

Structuring your essay

By way of introduction you should define the terms “style-shifting” and “codeswitching”, making a clear distinction between the functions of these two linguistic activities. Also, it is useful to indicate your essay strategy and how you will develop the discussion.

You might now proceed to discuss the terms in more detail, bringing in Coupland’s case-study as a means of reinforcing your ideas. Beyond this there is the opportunity to extend the commentary, looking at other scenarios [as in Readings B and C of Chapter 8] which will deepen our understanding of how, why and where the two activities may take place.

As appropriate, you might now give examples from your own observations or from your “cuttings” file before moving to a conclusion which rehearses the main points of your discussion.

TMA 03

Please return your completed assignment to your tutor to arrive by the end of week 13.

This assignment covers your study of Block 3(Weeks 9-12). Your answer should be about 1,500-2,000 words in length.

TMA 03

In Reading C of Chapter 2, Block 3 ,*Using English : from conversation to canon*, Simeon Yates makes a number of points about computer-mediated communication [CMC]. Assess his findings and discuss the extent to which CMC has become a distinctive form of English.

Before beginning your assignments, you should refer to the general guidance on essay writing at the beginning of this booklet.

The main focus for your discussion is clearly Reading C although you will need to move beyond this and examine other theories presented in other parts of Block 3. Of particular use you will find relevant ideas in:

- Chapters 1 and 3 of the same course book.
- Audiocassette 3, Bands 5 and 6.
- Chapters 6 and 7 of *Describing Language* – parts of the discussion on spoken and written English may be useful reference points.
- Associated notes in *Study Guide 3*.

Structuring your essay

In the first instance, having signalled how you intend to present your discussion, you will need to pay careful attention to Reading C, highlighting and extracting the major points which Yates raises and noting his concluding remarks. You should ensure that you give a clear definition of computer-mediated communication, indicating its formal features and characteristics.

You might then broaden the discussion, examining both Chapters 1 and 3 for the detail they respectively present on talking and writing practices in everyday English. This should enable you to isolate key differences when these practices are compared with the field of computing, picking up important advantages and disadvantages of the one when set against the other. Where relevant, draw briefly upon your cuttings file and other personal experience.

This might enable you to work towards a conclusion, summarizing ideas and giving some views on how far we may see CMC as a form of English in its own right.

Specify the sources on which you have drawn in your bibliography.

University marking and grading

In addition to doing the three TMAs, you are also required to take two quizzes. Together, the TMAs, and quizzes constitute 100% of the Continuous Assessment Component of the course. The weighing and allocation of marks (out of a 100) is as follows:

Three TMAs 35 marks
Two quizzes 15 marks

The AOU standard scale of performance for the course is as follows:

Letter Grade	Performance standard
A	Excellent
B+	Very good
B	
C+	Good
C	
D	Pass
F	Fail