

Answer **two** questions.

1 Spoken language and social groups

The following text is a transcription of part of a conversation between two friends in their twenties, Alyssia and Jessica. They are talking about how often they use their mobile phones.

Discuss ways in which the speakers are using language here to communicate and how their language is affected by the context. You should refer to specific details from the transcription, relating your observations to ideas from your wider study.

- Alyssia:** i have to actually do something so that i might stop thinking about it and change the behaviour of it because (.) it is addictive (.) i want to know how often do you check
//
- Jessica:** [laughs]
//
- Alyssia:** your phone↗ (.) you start walking to work (.) you look at your phone for facebook (.) theres nothing going on (.) check your emails (.) put it back in your pocket (.) do you ever go (.) oh (.) and then just get it out and automatically just look at it again↗ 5
- Jessica:** yeah [laughs]
//
- Alyssia:** yes so you probably check it more than you even think so 10
//
- Jessica:** so in terms of (.) checking my phone (.) oh (.) so (.) many times a day (.) in terms of actually unlocking (.) going in checking my emails (.) quite a few times a day so (.) between three (.) between three and five on non working days
//
- Alyssia:** i reckon youre far worse 15
//
- Jessica:** no i dont (.) i dont know what youre talking about
//
- Alyssia:** the thing is though
//
- Jessica:** but actually checking facebook im a bit (.) some days (.) a lot 20
//
- Alyssia:** yes
//
- Jessica:** but but when i say a lot (.) not your level
//
- Alyssia:** [laughs]
//
- Jessica:** like less than (.) less than ten times (.) but 25
//
- Alyssia:** i think its a stimulation thing as well (.) like youre just sitting there and you need (.) like you feel like your brain needs stimulation↗
//
- Jessica:** yeah (.) only last night when i was thinking (.) oh i should go to bed (.) i (.) for no good reason (.) i just checked my emails and checked 30

facebook (.) i was like (.) what am i doing↗ (.) im just scrolling though (.)
nothing is happening

//

Alyssia: yes [*laughs*]

//

Jessica: [*laughs*] why am i wasting (.) my time (.) doing that

Alyssia: its so true (.) its such a time waster

35

//

Jessica: and maybe thats (.) maybe i am addicted and dont
know it (.) just at a lower level than you are

//

Alyssia: [*laughs*]

//

Jessica: because i can't stop myself

Alyssia: the interaction is (.) it feels nice doesnt it↗

40

Jessica: yeah

TRANSCRIPTION KEY

(.) = micropause

underlined = stressed sound/syllable(s)

// = speech overlap

[*italics*] = paralinguistic features

↗ = upward intonation

2 English as a global language

The text below is from a 2016 article which was published on the BBC website.

Discuss what you feel are the most important issues raised here relating to the changing use of English as a global language. You should refer to specific details from the text as well as to ideas and examples from your wider study.

**Native English speakers are the world's worst communicators.
It might be their language, but the message is often lost.**

It was just one word in one email, but it triggered huge financial losses for a multinational company. The message, written in English, was sent by a native speaker to a colleague for whom English was a second language. Unsure of the word, the recipient found two contradictory meanings in his dictionary. He acted on the wrong one. 5

Months later, senior management investigated why the project had flopped, costing hundreds of thousands of dollars. "It all traced back to this one word," says Chia Suan Chong, a UK-based communications skills and intercultural trainer, who didn't reveal the tricky word because it is highly industry-specific and possibly identifiable. "Things spiralled out of control because both parties were thinking the opposite." 10

When such misunderstandings happen, it's usually the native speakers who are to blame. Ironically, they are worse at delivering their message than people who speak English as a second or third language, according to Chong.

The non-native speakers, it turns out, speak more purposefully and carefully, typical of someone speaking a second or third language. Anglophones, on the other hand, often talk too fast for others to follow, and use jokes, slang and references specific to their own culture, says Chong. In emails, they use baffling abbreviations such as 'OOO', instead of simply saying that they will be out of the office. "The native English speaker ... is the only one who might not feel the need to accommodate or adapt to the others," she adds. 15
20

Non-native speakers generally use more limited vocabulary and simpler expressions, without flowery language or slang. Because of that, they understand one another at face value. One bugbear is abbreviations. "The first time I worked in an international context somebody said, 'Eta 16:53,' and I thought, 'What on Earth is ETA?'" says Michael Blattner, head of training and proposition at Zurich Insurance Group. And then there's cultural style, Blattner says. When a Brit reacts to a proposal by saying, "That's interesting," a fellow Brit might recognise this as understatement for, "That's rubbish." But other nationalities would take the word "interesting" at face value, he says. 25

It's the native speaker who often risks missing out on closing a deal, warns Frenchman Jean-Paul Nerrière, formerly a senior international marketing executive at IBM. "Too many non-Anglophones, especially the Asians and the French, are too concerned about not 'losing face' — and nod approvingly while not getting the message at all," he says. 30

3 Language acquisition by children and teenagers

The following text is a transcription of part of a conversation between Jenny, aged 4 years 10 months, and Philip, aged 5 years. They are telling each other jokes and making up new jokes.

Discuss ways in which Jenny and Philip are using language here. You should refer to specific details from the transcription, relating your observations to ideas from your studies of language acquisition.

- Jenny:** why did (.) daddy jump over the road
- Philip:** err (3) because he was on a bicycle
- Jenny:** because (.) because he (.) because he fought (.) the cars (.) were (.) were gonna run him over
- Philip:** oh its not (.) its still my turn (1) what did the banana say to the young banana 5
- Jenny:** youre too little to (.) youre (.) er (.) erm (.) peel
- Philip:** (5) why couldnt the chicken cross the road
- Jenny:** (3) be (.) cause (1) he (1) he fought the traffic lights fell over
- Philip:** (3) oh i'll let you out of that one (.) it was right (.) it was the right answer (3) how did you know that was (.) how did you know it was the right answer? 10
- Jenny:** because i know that joke
- Philip:** (2) well it was really a different one (.) i didnt mean it really (.) it was the wrong one
- Jenny:** but you said
- Philip:** (4) why did the chicken cross the road 15
- Jenny:** (3) because it was too scared
- Philip:** no (.) because it was brave (2) its my go now (.) again
- Jenny:** //
yes
- Philip:** this ones (.) easy peasy (1) why couldnt the chicken cross the road
- Jenny:** because it was too (1) frightened 20
- Philip:** did you hear it easy peasy one?
- Jenny:** yes
- Philip:** you can do one
- Jenny:** why didnt (.) why did the little girl go outside
- Philip:** er (2) because she forgot to ask her mum 25

Jenny: YEAH (1) thats the right answer

Philip: i didnt know it when i (.) when i thought of that

Jenny: now its your turn

Philip: why did the boy go outside

Jenny: because (.) he forgot (.) because he asked his mum

30

Philip: cause (.) because (3) he just runned out

Jenny: but (.) but you said (.) why didnt the little boy (1) go out

Philip: well it was because (1) he runned out

Jenny: oh

TRANSCRIPTION KEY

(1) = pause in seconds

(.) = micropause

underlined = stressed sound/syllable(s)

[UPPER CASE] = words spoken with increased volume

↗ = upward intonation

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