

General Certificate of Education  
June 2008  
Advanced Level Examination

**ENGLISH LANGUAGE (SPECIFICATION A)  
Unit 6 Language Debates**

**ENA6**



Thursday 19 June 2008 1.30 pm to 4.00 pm

**For this paper you must have:**

- a 12-page answer book.

Time allowed: 2 hours 30 minutes

**Instructions**

- Use black ink or black ball-point pen.
- Write the information required on the front of your answer book. The *Examining Body* for this paper is AQA. The *Paper Reference* is ENA6.
- There are **two** sections:  
**Section A:** Data Analysis  
**Section B:** Response in a Particular Form.
- You **must** answer the compulsory question in both sections.
- Do all rough work in the answer book. Cross through any work you do not want to be marked.

**Information**

- The maximum mark for this paper is 80.
- The marks for questions are shown in brackets.
- You will be marked on your ability to use good English, to organise information clearly and to use specialist vocabulary where appropriate.

**Advice**

- It is recommended that you spend 30 minutes reading and preparing the source materials, 60 minutes writing your answer to Section A and 60 minutes writing your answer to Section B.
- This unit assesses your understanding of the relationship between the different aspects of English Language.

---

The topic for this paper is language and representation.

It is recommended that you read all the texts before beginning your answers to the tasks.

---

**SECTION A – Data Analysis**

**Answer all three parts of Question 1.**

**It is recommended that you spend 1 hour writing your answer to this question. You should spend a total of about 20 minutes on (a) and (b) and 40 minutes on (c).**

**Mark allocations are shown in brackets. Another 10 marks are available for the quality of your written expression in all three parts of Question 1.**

---

- 1** (a) Read the **Data List**, which you will find on page 5. Comment linguistically on the word formation processes shown by **three** words in this list. (5 marks)
- (b) Explain the methodology you would use to investigate linguistic representations of gender. (5 marks)
- (c) Read **Texts A** and **B**, which you will find on pages 6 and 7. **Text A** is an article from *Guardian Unlimited*, the online edition of *The Guardian*. **Text B** is an e-mail from a reader in response to the article.
- Analyse and evaluate how ideas and opinions about language and gender are presented in the article and e-mail.
  - Discuss how convincing you find these ideas and opinions.
- (20 marks)

**Turn over for Section B**

---

**SECTION B – Response in a Particular Form****Answer both parts of Question 2.**

---

- 2** (a) Your task is to write an article for the online edition of *The Guardian* as a response to the ideas in **Text A**, ‘Conservative to the Core’ by Zoe Williams and **Text B**, the e-mail AngryFromBerkshire. These are printed on pages 6 and 7.

You should make use of the ideas and examples in **Texts C, D and E** on pages 8 to 12. You may also draw on your own knowledge and research.

In your article you should explain and comment on linguistic views about the significance of sexist language and develop your own views.

(35 marks)

- (b) Identify **three** different choices of language you made when writing your article. Describe your choices linguistically and comment on the meanings and effects you were trying to create.

(5 marks)

**END OF QUESTIONS**

**Data List**

New Word	Meaning
wags	wives and girlfriends (often of sportsmen)
wifey	girlfriend
babymomma	girlfriend
ball and chain	wife or girlfriend
geezerbird	a tomboy who enjoys typically male pastimes
yummy mummy	an attractive woman with children

---

**Text A**

**Zoe Williams**

Comment

---

## **Conservative to the core**

**To celebrate today's street slang as fun and trendy is to ignore its deep-rooted misogyny**

**Zoe Williams**  
**Friday April 14, 2006**  
**The Guardian**

There is a new language on the streets of London and other British cities, according to academic research: "Jafaican", supposedly derived from Jamaican and African slang, is now way more prevalent than cockney.

Despite the name, there is in reality no racial demarcation and a good deal more Ali G posturing here than genuine Jamaican roots, and the chief uniting feature of Jafaican speakers is age (very young).

But when you read the newspaper reports, you can smell the benign neutrality wafting off the page. "Listen here, chaps. When youngsters today say 'jamming', they mean hanging around! 'Nang' might not sound like a word to you and me, but it means good. 'Sket' is a loose woman, and 'bitch' continues to mean girlfriend - but sket seems to have replaced 'ho', which is now woefully out of date and used only by the rap community because it rhymes with so many things. 'Babymamma' has come and gone, to be overtaken by the old-fashioned sounding 'wifey'."

What all these words in fact have in common is that they define women by sexual function - denigrating them if they show any interest in sex themselves, ranging them according to their physical attributes and dismissing them once their physical peak has passed.

Now, vocabulary and slang are not incidental decorations to culture - they are at its core. While probably all the world's languages contain pejorative words for women, the frequency with which they appear in our new, fun urban slang should give us pause. It should alert us to the fact that this is not a playful alternative to cockney, it is about the formalised subjugation of women.

It is incredibly unfashionable to object to language and ideas that denigrate women. I'm almost embarrassed; I feel like I've left the house wearing something fluorescent. First of all, this is considered to be synonymous with humourlessness, as if the hilarity that was the Loaded magazine revolution (Oh, its dazzlement! Its flights of fancy!) effectively tainted any serious discussion of sexism with myopic earnestness.

This is why young women do not now call themselves feminists, even when espousing views that come, explicitly, from the feminist movement. And sure, nobody wants to be the last person in the country who objects to being called "darling"; nobody wants to be the person who isn't allowed to shave her legs, for reasons as opaque as her tights have to be. But there is a lot at stake here. If youth culture is increasingly sexually conservative and two-tiered in its judgments, and increasingly portrays one gender as the property of the other, this will ultimately tell in the way women are treated, personally and professionally, when today's teenagers are in their prime.

You could argue that it's telling already in the ever more misogynistic attitudes surrounding sexual violence. But whichever way you cut it, it isn't funny; and the idea that we never objected to it because we didn't want to sound like we didn't understand irony would be less funny still.

Ultimately, if our culture had any respect for feminism, teenagers in Britain would not be talking about women like this. It has nothing to do with female standing in Jamaica or the Ali G land of myth - this is a trickle-down from a prissy, cowardly, milk-livered British mainstream.

Source: ZOE WILLIAMS, *The Guardian*, 2006

---

**Text B****AngryFromBerkshire**

April 14, 2006 11:10 AM

Will slang affect teenagers' attitudes towards women MORE than the latest school reports that show girls outperforming boys at every turn? I would doubt that.

If anything, slang could be seen as the last dying gasp of misogyny. Name-calling is a pretty weak form of attack, innit.

And don't blame men's magazines like loaded for turning young girls off feminism. I think feminists turn girls off feminism. The fact that the women's movement achieved so much and yet is so unpopular can't be blamed on anyone but feminists. You do your own publicity.

You have a page in the Guardian where you could make a difference, yet you choose to waste it bleating about slang, which doesn't matter. Can't you stop complaining and instead do something that might actually make a difference -- like discover the UK companies that pay female employees less than their male colleagues, and publish their names? That way, graduates could boycott those companies until they were forced to change their pay structure.

As Roseanne Barr said, "Women need to learn that power isn't something that's given to you - it's something you take."

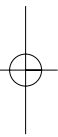
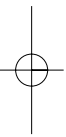
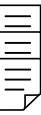
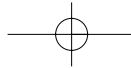
Source: ZOE WILLIAMS, *The Guardian*, 2006

---

**Text C**

**Text C** has been omitted due to third-party copyright constraints.





**Text D****Extract 1****Political correctness – iron hand of coercion  
or velvet glove of consensus?**

Linguistic legislation generally has a lousy track record when it comes to getting people to ‘reform’ their linguistic behaviour. Typically we do our own thing regardless of what the authorities tell us. In this respect, the phenomenon called political correctness has been interesting. Whatever you may think of it, political correctness has been remarkably effective in getting people to alter their language habits, far more effective than other kinds of prescriptive practices. The so-called generic *he* (as in *if a student wants to, he can collect the reading lists at the office*) and terms such as *chairman*, *man-made*, *lady doctor*, *woman priest* and *authoress* are rarely encountered these days. 5

People generally don’t like linguistic change, especially when it smacks of deliberate manipulation. And the success is all the more remarkable here, given that political correctness is not a movement that anyone appears to endorse. People whinge about losing what they see as their freedom to ‘call things by their right names’, as it’s sometimes put, and complain endlessly about the need to rescue words that have been hijacked by it. Moreover, PC-motivated name changes are seen by many as ‘the thin end of the wedge’ that will work to fragment society into different factions and special interest groups. All this hostility is further fuelled by media hyperbole and misrepresentation. 10

So how do we explain the success of political correctness in changing people’s linguistic behaviour? Certainly there have been some legal restrictions imposed on open expression. In the USA, for example, there have been formal speech codes imposed on certain campuses and other kinds of official prohibitions that make it an offence to use expressions deemed sexist, racist, homophobic or anti-Semitic. In some celebrated instances people have even been packed off to sensitivity workshops. But this sort of restraint and repression is by no means commonplace and restrictions are always difficult to enforce. Perhaps, then, the linguistic changes we’re seeing result from the many manuals of non-discriminatory language that have been published over the years. But I’m not convinced that language change is ever a direct consequence of the recommendations of handbooks and style guides. These linguistics authorities are only ever guidelines – in the end they rely on people making their own personal decisions to alter their language. Perhaps the changes we’re seeing are simply the inevitable outcome of, say, successful equal-opportunity practices; in other words, a natural linguistic evolution in the face of more general social change. Certainly, language change typically follows social change, rather than the other way around. 15 20 25 30 35 40 45

---

**Extract 2**

There is plenty of evidence to show that loaded language does work to influence memory and perception. Research carried out by Elizabeth Loftus, for example, shows that the simple phrasing of a question can have a substantial effect on the testimony of an eyewitness. It may even alter how the person remembers an event. One well-known experiment involved a hundred people who were shown a film of a multiple-car crash. Fifty were asked how fast the cars were going when they 'hit'; fifty were asked how fast were they going when they 'smashed'. The second fifty averaged an estimated speed that was faster than the first fifty. Some of them also saw broken glass. Apparently there was none. Moreover, a question phrased, 'Did you see the broken headlight?' was more likely to produce false recognition or 'don't know' responses than the question 'Did you see a broken headlight?'

Source: KATE BURRIDGE, *Weeds in the Garden of Words*,  
Cambridge University Press, 2005, pp.56–57, 170

---

**Text E**

**Text E** has been omitted due to third-party copyright constraints.

**END OF TEXTS**