GCE ENGLISH LANGUAGE
FOR TEACHING FROM 2015

NON-EXAMINATION ASSESSMENT

COMPONENT 4

LANGUAGE AND IDENTITY

Overview:

Candidates are to present a 2500-3500 word investigation (advisory length) on the theme of 'Language and Identity'. This investigation must be **an independent study** therefore centres should not teach to one task/topic as this would be a reductive approach.

The suggestions here are just that-different ideas to stimulate discussions between teachers and learners in producing their NEA investigation. WJEC does not prescribe a specific structure for the essay but learners should be reminded of the Assessment Objectives throughout the planning, drafting, editing and redrafting process.

At a basic level, the investigation should broadly cover:

- A brief introduction to the area of study under scrutiny
- A brief introduction to the hypothesis to be tested
- A brief explanation of the methodology
- The main body of the investigation as an analysis into the **sense of identity**, including:
    - Selection and use of knowledge to argue a case
    - Interrogation of data to support the argument
- A conclusion about the ways in which **language** is used to create and communicate a sense of identity.

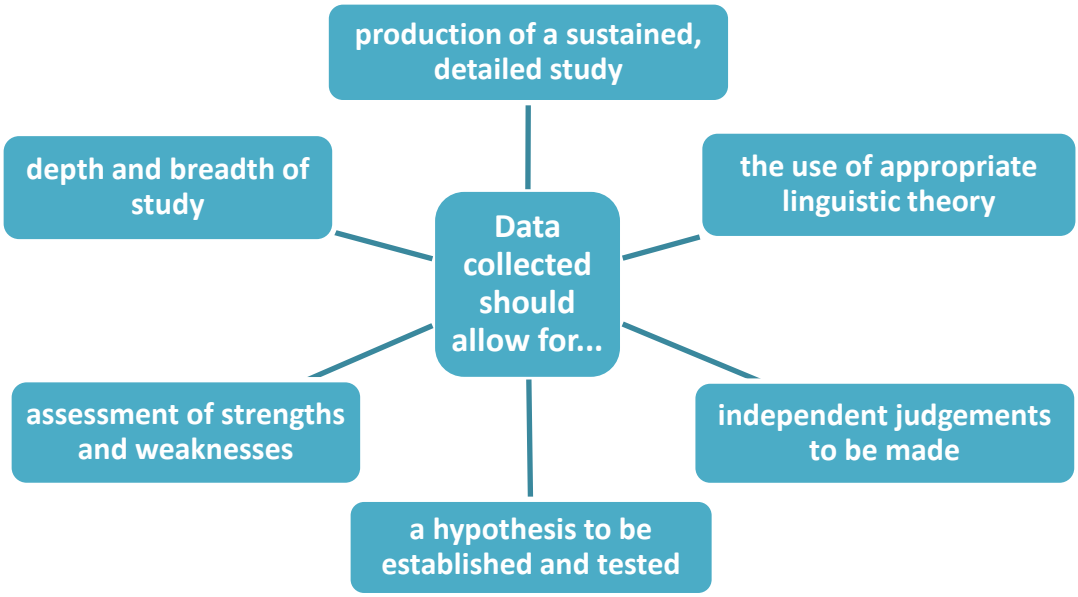
Development of the task:

Learners should identify one of the following areas of study linked to the **theme of language and identity** that interests them:

a. Language and self-representation
b. Language and gender
c. Language and culture
d. Language diversity

<table>
<tr><td colspan="2">Possible areas for investigation:</td></tr>
<tr><td>Language and self-representation:
Register
Communication strategies
Accommodation
Politeness</td><td>*Centres are reminded that in this area of study, self-representation relates to the candidate's own use of language rather than how others present themselves.</td></tr>
<tr><td>Language and gender:
Representation
Attitudes
Gender neutral language
Linguistic conventions</td><td rowspan="2">*When supporting learners in the development of their NEA titles, centres are reminded that there can be areas overlap, particularly with gender and culture. However it is vital that learners are clear regarding the area that provides the main focus of their investigation, in order to provide insightful, accurate, well-argued responses.</td></tr>
<tr><td>Language and culture:
The arts
Sports and entertainment
Education
Belief systems</td></tr>
<tr><td>Language diversity:
Geographical and social variation
African American Vernacular English (AAVA)
Other Englishes
Occupational language</td><td></td></tr>
</table>

Learners should independently conduct research on their chosen area of study and collect a range of relevant data on which to base their investigation. As learners are encouraged in their NEA investigation to synthesise insights developed throughout the course, it is possible to include both spoken and written data.



To this end, there is no set length or word count for the data chosen for exploration as the richness and linguistic challenge of the data will determine how many sources are used. One health warning would be that in choosing a large number of texts for study, a learner will be led into a superficial exploration across many rather than a detailed analysis. Learners should be directed to data that will allow for high-quality, in-depth analysis.

The following approach provides learners with a useful chronological guide to the investigation process:

- Choose a topic linked to Language and Identity
- Offer a hypothesis choosing one of the topic areas as a focus
- Gather data relevant to the proposed theory
- Draft title with close focus on area of study
- Interrogate the data
- Reflect on efficacy of title and adapt as necessary
- Reflect on findings
- Offer conclusions
- Compile bibilography

References made through footnotes and bibliographies are excluded from the word count.

References must always be clearly acknowledged: by direct reference if a quotation is used; and by an appended bibliography. If footnotes are used, the relevant text must appear in the bibliography. It is important that learners are both accurate and consistent in their approach to referencing and therefore references should be presented in a recognised format such as the Harvard system.

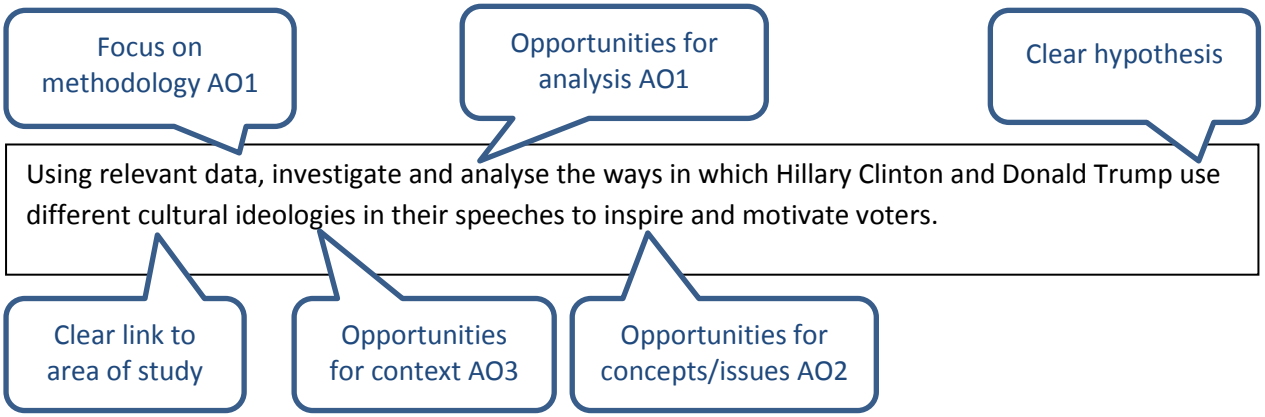
Developing a Title:

Learners may benefit from having a strong steer initially-one that includes 'investigate and analyse' and 'using relevant data' may be beneficial. Both the link between **language and identity**, and the chosen language area must be clear within the wording of the question. The focus of the investigation may alter slightly as the learner explores the issues/concepts and data in greater depth.

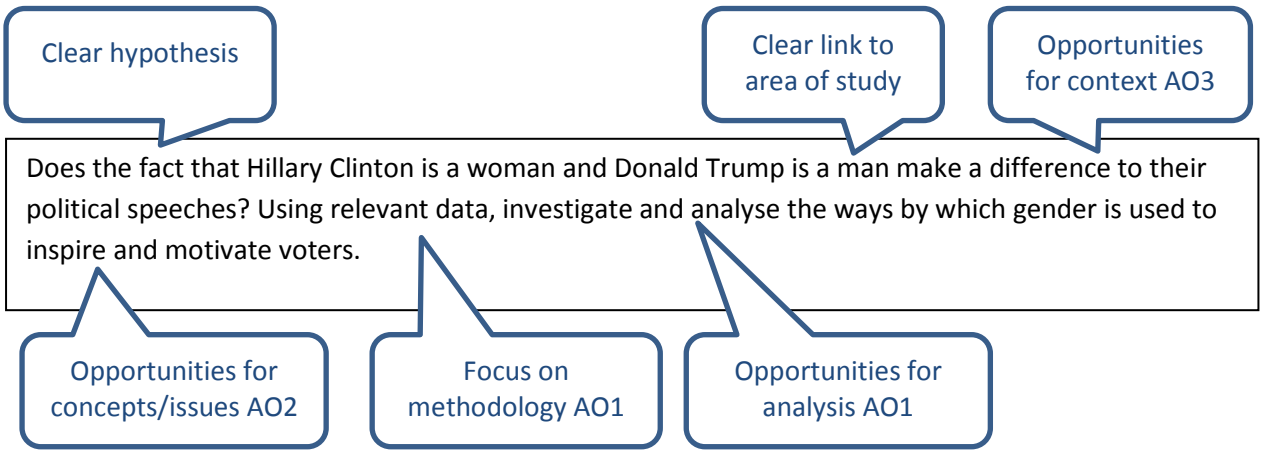
Look at the examples below and think about how they could be reworded to provide a stronger focus and to address AOs:

Title: An investigation into how Hillary Clinton and Donald Trump use language to gain votes.

The hypothesis is not really clear here and there is no link to language and identity or the chosen language area. It would be better worded like this:



Alternatively:



CANDIDATE	TEACHER
☐ Draft wording of task	☐ Advise on wording
☐ A4 page plan/outline	☐ Advise on structure/content
☐ Opening/sample paragraph(s)	☐
☐ First draft: Self assessment	☐
☐ Redraft for teacher's general observations	☐ General comments (see below)

The JCQ document, Instructions for conducting non-examination assessments, lists the general observations permissible on draft work as:

- sources of information
- relevance of materials/concepts
- structure of the response (for example, chapter titles and content)
- techniques of data collection
- techniques of data presentation
- skills of analysis and evaluation
- health and safety considerations, including the use of equipment
- potential ethical considerations
- security of their work

In terms of self-assessment following the first draft, learners may find it useful to check their work not only against the assessment objectives but also against the pointers below:

1. balancing the AOs according to their weightings (i.e. AO1 is double-weighted)
2. economical expression
3. essay structure
4. use of quotation and support
5. maintaining a language focus

Addressing the Assessment Objectives:

Learners may wish to consider the following guidance in the development of their investigation to ensure that they are addressing the assessment objectives.

AO1 i	AO1 ii	AO1 iii	AO2	AO3
• knowledge of how language works • develops interpretations • keeps clear focus on task • apply appropriate analytical approaches	• a range of relevant terminology is used accurately • avoids feature-spotting	• a formal tenor with appropriate lexical choices for academic writing • proof read work • spelling and punctuation are accurate • informal expressions are avoided • sentence structure is controlled • paragraphs have clear topic sentences	• explores concepts linked to area of study • identifies and explores relevant issues • apt support for comments made	• shows understanding of the effects of contextual factors • discussion of how use of language creates meaning rather than commentary on meaning • draws conclusions based on critical evaluation

Most successful tasks:

- ✓ have a clearly defined focus which is **closely linked to language and identity** and one of the four areas for study. It should be manageable and not too wide-ranging;
- ✓ encourage a **language-focused response** with a clear emphasis on critical analysis;
- ✓ ensure that context does not drive the response but is used to inform an analysis of language and meaning in the targetted area, rather than the context being used as evidence for socio-historical generalisations;
- ✓ include a strong hypothesis to help candidates develop a line of argument.

Restrictions:

Investigations focused on the acquisition of language are not permitted.

It is not possible to use English translations of foreign texts, as the nuances of the English language will be lost.