



A-level ENGLISH LANGUAGE

Paper 2 Language diversity and change

Insert

Texts for Section B

Text A

Text A is an extract from an online article about attitudes to accents. It was published by the Canadian newspaper *The Globe and Mail* in 2013.

THE
GLOBE
AND
MAIL*

Accent-shy Brits anxious to talk ‘posh’

Accent-shy Brits anxious to talk ‘posh’

PAUL WALDIE > LONDON – APRIL 30, 2013

Tough economic times have prompted many Britons to seek out some unusual help in order to get ahead: elocution¹ lessons.

Calls to companies offering speech tutors have soared in recent years as job seekers worry their accents are holding them back and parents fret their children will miss out on places at elite private schools unless they speak “posh”. Some tutors are working with children as young as two years old, often charging up to \$90 an hour for their services.

Private speech tutors have popped up by the dozens, offering a range of courses for children and adults. These modern-day versions of Professor Henry Higgins, the fictional linguist who taught Eliza Doolittle an upper-crust accent in *My Fair Lady*², belie the notion that Britain is moving away from its class system or that accents are fading away. If anything, today’s economic slowdown has proven that both remain entrenched.

“It is a class statement, I suppose, in many ways,” said Nathaniel McCullagh, who runs Simply Learning Tuition, which works on speaking techniques with young children in London, including many who come from wealthy immigrant families.

Mr. McCullagh said the company’s tutors often act as “role models” for children aged 3 or 4, giving them a chance to hear a proper English accent and learn to speak with confidence. The tutors “are not super-middle or upper-class or anything, they’ve just got nice neutral accents. That’s a major part of the job,” he said.

Speaking properly can be critical to getting into top London preschools, he added. Like schools sought out by ambitious parents in New York and other big global cities, they often informally assess a child’s speaking during the admission process.

For many adults, too, toning down a regional accent can make all the difference in getting a job or advancing in a career. In a study last year, thetutortpages.com, a private tutoring company based in London, said it received more requests for tutors teaching correct speech than for any other subject. And many of those asking for help said “they wanted to modify or lose their accents because they feared being ridiculed or held back in their careers,” the company found.

¹ The skill of clear and expressive speech and pronunciation

² A musical in which a working-class woman is taught to speak like an upper-class woman so people will believe she is upper-class

Text B

Text B is an article about accents by a tutor. It is from the website thetutortpages.com which advertises private tutor services. The tutor teaches elocution, the skill of clear and expressive speech and pronunciation. The article was accessed in 2017.



The way we speak can change our life

By: Please [log in](#) to see tutor details

Subject: [Elocution/Accent Reduction](#)

Last updated: 01/02/2015

Tags: [accent reduction](#), [elocution](#), [elocution lessons](#), [received pronunciation](#)



Received Pronunciation (RP) was once the Gold Standard in speech and now we find it is much more acceptable to have a 'modified RP' accent, which reflects the dynamic language we enjoy.

Most people have an opinion about the various accents around the country and there is a common acceptance that a regional accent reflects a person of a particular social standing. Received Pronunciation is still expected within many national institutions including the Church of England, legal professions and Parliament. Politicians often take coaching lessons to modify their speech to appeal to their electorate or peers, notably Margaret Thatcher's endeavours were much publicised.

Whether born in the UK or abroad, learning English as a second language, or mellowing an accent and polishing the delivery, we can make it more understandable and better received which is a great way of progressing within both the industrial and domestic environment.

It can be useful to adopt the local patois in order to assist or encourage a particular outcome and it is the recognition of this and the ability to develop our speech that will move us from the shopfloor to the boardroom.

Allow the way you speak to give you the control to change your life!

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About The Author

Our accent will define us, elocution and the way we speak will influence our life, and public speaking can be traumatic, but with the right guidance and practice we will soon have you aching to be in the limelight, then see how speech changes lives.

END OF TEXTS

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